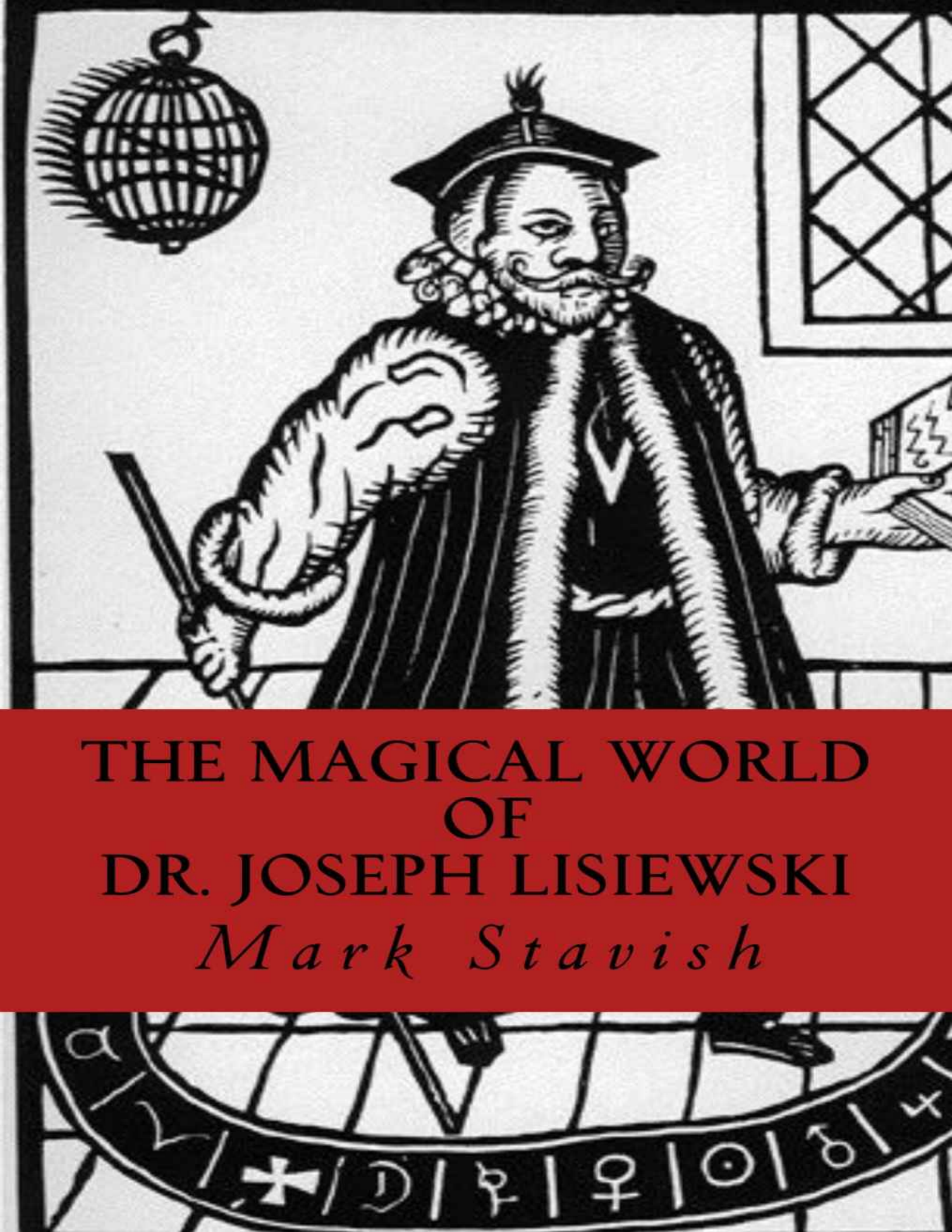
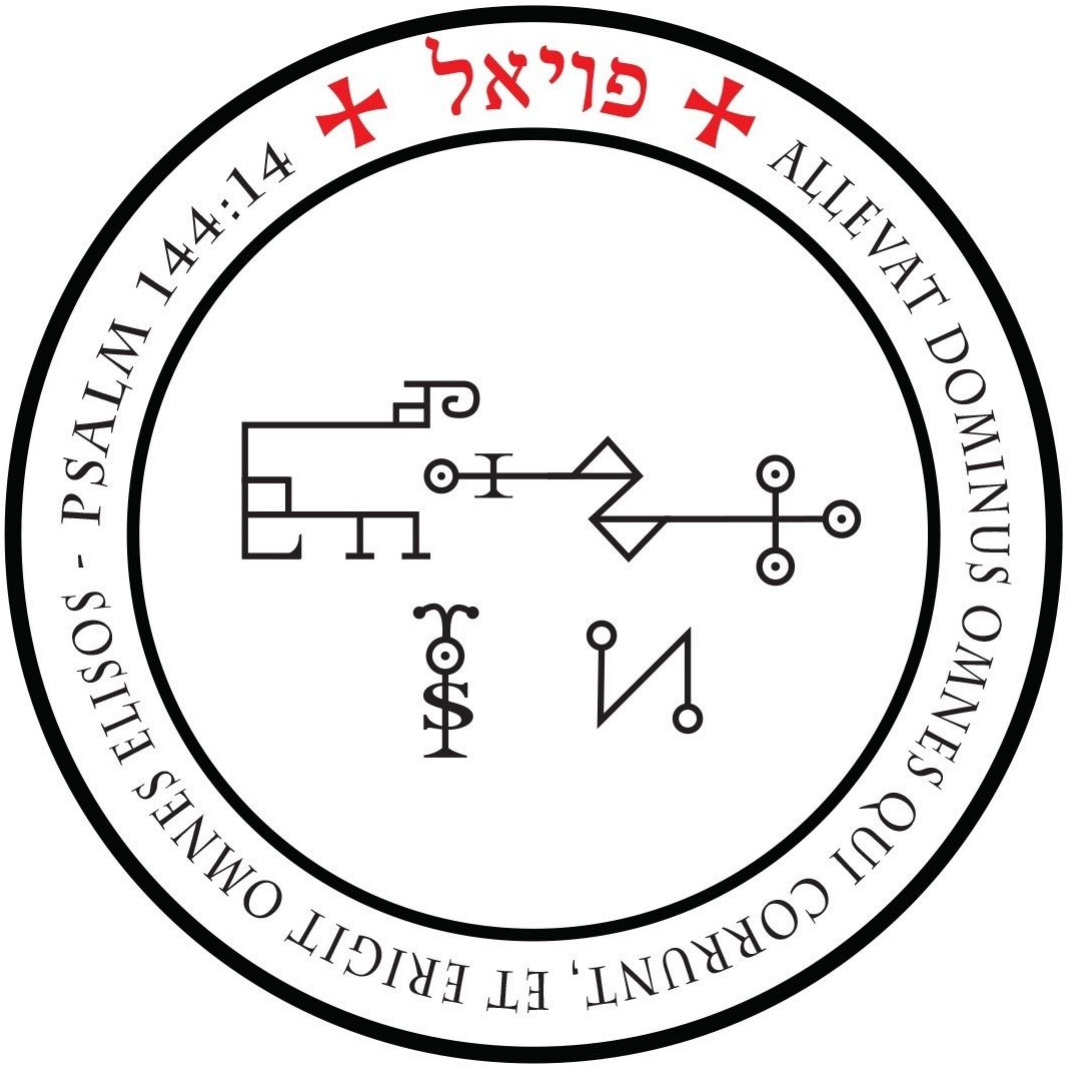


THE MAGICAL WORLD OF DR. JOSEPH LISIEWSKI

Mark Stavish



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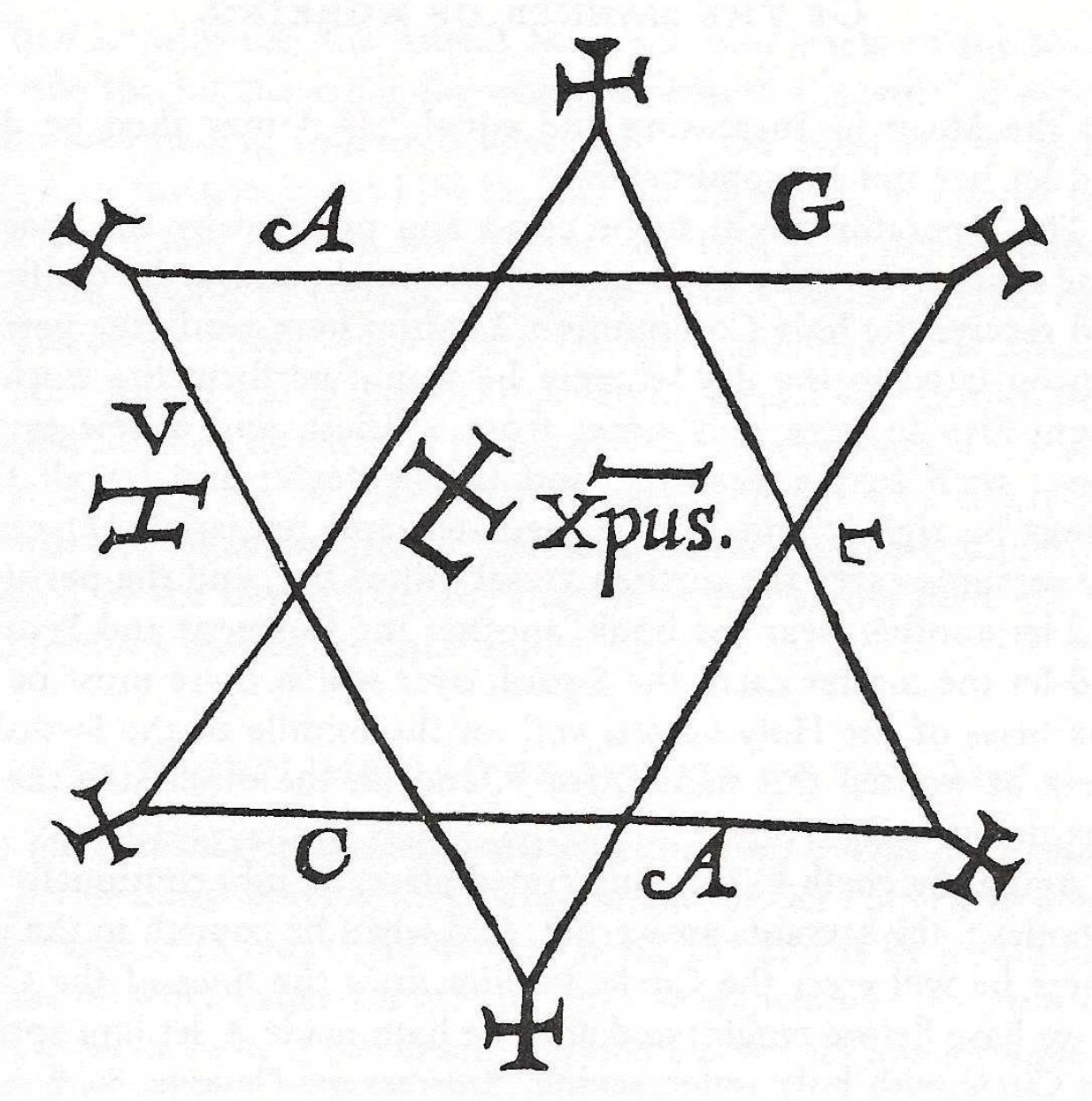

Mark Stavish, m.a.
IHS Founder & Director of Studies

The Magical World of Dr. Joseph Lisiewski A Memoir

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With contributions by Mark Stavish:

- *The Philosopher's Stone: Spiritual Alchemy, Psychology, and Ritual Magic* by Israel Regardie

Edited and Annotated by Chic and Sandra Cicero Chapter Twelve:

"Introduction to Alchemy—A Golden Dawn Perspective" (2nd edition, 2013)

• *Howlings from the Pit: A Practical Handbook of Medieval Magic, Goetia & Theurgy* by Dr. Joseph C. Lisiewski Edited with Commentary by Mark Stavish (2011)

• *The Key to Solomon's Key: Is This the Lost Symbol of Masonry?* by Lon Milo DuQuette with Introduction by James Wasserman

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• *Israel Regardie and the Philosopher's Stone: The Alchemical Arts Brought Down to Earth* by Dr. Joseph C. Lisiewski Introduction by Mark Stavish (2009)

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• *Llewellyn's 2008 Magical Almanac*
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dedication ~

This book is dedicated to all who have gone before us on the Path, all who walk it now, and all who will enter on to the Path of Return in the future. May they find the Illumination

and Peace Profound they seek, know their True Will, accomplish the Great Work, and "come to a good end."

∞

"Praise be to God in Eternity, who has given to Nature such power and virtue. Amen."
— Splendor Solis

acknowledgments ~

In any undertaking of value it is important to recognize that while we do "the Work" for ourselves and within ourselves, we do not do the Work alone. We are dependent upon those who have gone before us as well as those who help us in the present. To this end I recognize Joseph Lisiewski, Frater Albertus, and Israel Regardie, without whom this book could not have been written. This lineage, however, does not end here, but must include Aleister Crowley, Samuel MacGregor Mathers, and, by extension, such luminaries as Frederick Hockley, ´Eliphas L´evi, Francis Barrett, and all who influenced the formation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn—going back to Cornelius Agrippa himself, if not further!

Like it or not this book is a chapter in the modern history of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn as well as that of modern alchemy— and here again by extension, the Ancient Mystical Order Rosæ Crucis (AMORC) and to a lesser degree the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) and the Argenteum Astrum (A ∴ A ∴). Hermetic initiation is less a tree and more a grapevine, with wild and winding roots that at times seem to appear out of nowhere, but which indeed have a connection below the surface.

In this regard we can firmly place myself and Alfred DeStefano III within that line. To some degree even doubly so for Alfred, whose correspondence with Kenneth Grant (Crowley's second-best-known secretary and erstwhile head of the Typhonian O.T.O.) gives him a second-generation connection to "the Beast" himself.

Yet, even with such a lineage, it is important to remember that each of us is responsible for preserving through learning, embodying through practicing, and expanding through teaching, the intellectual and practical methods we have received. This alone is what makes and keeps a tradition vital.

Each of you who read this are indebted to my wife and children for the tremendous amount of sacrifice they have made on behalf of the Work. This is equally true of Alfred, whose wife Kathryn has been a tremendous support to him as he worked on this and nearly every Institute for Hermetic Studies project. Without their support, this book would not exist.

The same holds true of our numerous benefactors, who contributed the funding that made the writing and publishing of this book possible. These men and women include:

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Introduction

Paul Bowersox once told me, "You know, you're the Forrest Gump of modern esotericism. You have known so many people and been at so many events, but you've rarely stepped into the limelight." Well, if I am "Forrest Gump"—the main character in the 1994 movie (based on the novel by Winston Groom) in which a young man of genuinely good heart, unusual physical skill, and uncertain intelligence, seems to stumble into critical events in history—then Joseph Lisiewski is "Dr. Walter Bishop." Dr. Bishop (as many of you will know) is the central figure in the television show *Fringe*, where our acid-dropping genius engages in researching extra-sensory perception, parallel universes, and governmental conspiracies— all while drinking root beer floats. Bishop, of course, is not real, but he might as well be; and though Lisiewski *is* real, he might as well be fiction. Sometimes, as they say, "the truth is stranger."

In many ways it is appropriate that I should write this book about my relationship with Joseph Lisiewski, arguably one of the most influential occultists of the early Twenty-First Century. Just as he wrote *Israel Regardie and the Philosopher's Stone*,[1] a book about his unparalleled relationship with

[1] Joseph C. Lisiewski, Ph.D., *Israel Regardie and the Philosopher's Stone: The Alchemical Arts Brought Down to Earth* (Tempe, AZ: Original Falcon Press, 2008).

xiii Israel Regardie and Frater Albertus, I have written this book about my ten-year relationship with him. In many ways I am the only one who can write this book. Many times Joe told me that I was his closest friend, and I am sure that was true. By his own admission, his ability to maintain relationships beyond a few years was limited. However, to understand Joseph Lisiewski and what is said here, you need to understand two important points of reference: his early childhood in the dying coal regions of Northeastern Pennsylvania and his birth sign.

Born in Ashland, Pennsylvania, in 1949, he came of age when World War Two and Korean War veterans were watching their world slowly

collapse around them as the coal, rail, and related industries they worked in contracted and collapsed. Life was hard, dirty, and at times violent. The Roman Catholic Church was the dominant source of education for many, with religious instruction by Eastern Orthodox Churches and various Protestant sects coming in second and third. While it would be unfair to characterize the men who lived and worked in these small towns across the region as typically "blue collar," the culture of hard work, hard play (drinking and sports), and profound suppression of emotions can be summed up in the phrase "men don't cry." A strong culture of deer, bear, and rabbit hunting—not for sport, but rather to feed their families—would aid many of them as they eventually found themselves drafted to fight in Vietnam.

Joe was born on April 16, 1949 (Sun in Aries, Cancer on the Ascendant, and Moon in Sagittarius).[2] Christened Joseph Charles Lisiewski, he was a typical Aries: physically strong, domineering, quick to anger, and with a penchant toward violence, both physical (in his youth) and verbal—for this reason I have had to clean up some of what he said. The stream of vulgarity that he could issue forth was stunningly harsh and humorous at the same time (a trait shared by

[2] [We have attempted to check and confirm the accuracy of all dates given in this book. However, there do appear to be some slight discrepancies in this regard among the various sources consulted. —Ed.]

Joseph C. Lisiewski, circa 2007

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky)—but far too frequent for regular conversation. He was quick to start many things, but had trouble at times with the follow-through and completion. With a tremendous amount of "energy in his head," as we like to say, he was intelligent, but by his own admission not an intellectual. He voiced harsh disdain for abstractions and theoretical notions. Practical concerns and

physical results were what dominated his activities. For Lisiewski, the *physical* world is where we live, and so it is *here* that the results of our actions ought to be felt and measured. As he often asked,

"What good is all this Rising on the Planes [psychic visions] when you can't even pay your water bill?" This was the type of question he asked many times, and for a small group of people within the current generation of practicing occultists it would be the litmus test of their work. In the same vein,

Lisiewski would utter (in a slow voice, imitating his mentor): "Albertus would say, 'Yes, yes, and where are the results?' " For Lisiewski, magic and alchemy were about one thing: practical results. This is what made him so popular with his admirers and vilified by his detractors. He spent a lifetime researching and experimenting with methods that made "as above, so below" a reality verifiable both subjectively and objectively.

With Cancer Rising, he was one who liked both change and stability; home is where he spent most of his time. It is no surprise that he eventually moved back to his hometown late in life, and even later moved from there to his final residence in Beaver Springs (Pennsylvania). Sensitive, yet unsophisticated about emotions, he was psychic as well as natural at psychism or affecting material phenomena. True to the influence of Cancer, his life would have been dramatically different if his childhood environment had been more nurturing and loving. It should also come as no surprise that while Lisiewski wrote his memoir about Regardie and Albertus over thirty years after the events occurred, his saving grace was that he was a self-described "pack rat" who kept everything, even unopened letters from decades earlier, by which he was able to reference extensive notes and correspondence from the years involved. According to one astrological source, Cancer's love for home, heritage, and the past make them the most common birth sign employed in the antique business. That is a fine description of Lisiewski; from this, his

emphasis on traditional methods of occult working and preference for older, more easily repaired laboratory equipment is easily understood.

For myself, I am not so fortunate. Much of the early email correspondence was lost, but detailed notes from our conversations over the years remained. I began writing this book in late December 2013, and published it as an essay in the electronic newsletter of the Institute for Hermetic Studies, VOXHERMES (New Year's Day 2014), with the title "Some Passing Thoughts on Dr. Joseph C. Lisiewski." This proved

an interesting coincidence—as arguably the most important magical ritual of his life took place on New Year's Eve 1966, when he was seventeen years old. This ritual was detailed in his book *Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation*,[3] and as Lisiewski told me, it would dominate the direction of his life. It would be the cause of his seventeen-year relationship with Israel Regardie, who in turn would direct him to Frater Albertus and alchemy, from which all of his publications would later spring.

The influence of Moon in Sagittarius may be by far the most important of the three aspects for readers, as that is what their encounter with Lisiewski is all about: in astrological terms, it constitutes his desire to make a difference in the philosophical and spiritual lives of others. Beneath his bombastic tone and, at times, repetitive writing style was the desire to help people learn how to help themselves. He wanted to save them the time, resources, and suffering he had experienced, while still requiring them to take responsibility for their lives. Lisiewski knew too well that occultism could easily be an escape, the search for a "magic bullet" that solves all of our problems (and that, seemingly, without effort).

However, even this was tempered, or alchemically tincted, by his Aries nature. Lisiewski sought not only to turn people toward tradition

—he actively wanted to *destroy* the New Age Movement. He was a very divisive person, very good at

" *solve*," but not consistently good at "*coagula*." The "breaking" intended to get to the heart of the matter of topics he felt very passionate about, as he believed them to be critical for daily living. He saw modern spirituality—along with contemporary magic, or anything from the formation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (1888) onwards—as a set of halftruths based on wishful thinking which people refused to see the uselessness or even danger of when it failed to deliver the promised grandiose results. For Lisiewski, the magical

[3]Joseph C. Lisiewski, Ph.D., *Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 2004).

thinking of contemporary spirituality was an abomination that had created untold suffering for himself and others—a suffering in part caused by confusion and reckless syncretism, resulting in internal inconsistencies, which in turn were the source of failure. For many, the medicine for this magical disease can best be described by his emphasis on having a clear personal understanding of the magical operation one is doing, what each of its parts mean, and what the expected outcome will be—what he called the "subjective synthesis." This synthesis could be fostered by analyzing each and every aspect of a ritual through a method he called "kabbalistic analysis." This was laborious and time consuming. Those with more steel could always return to traditional sources and methods of working to rectify this modern error. In Joe's case, this even meant traveling back in time and killing the modern movement, or at least his involvement in it, at the root.

This book is about demons, both the kind that can be summoned inside the ceremonial triangles, mirrors, and crystal balls of ceremonial magic, and the kind buried deep inside the dungeons of our minds. It is also about evoking them to

"appearance and manifestation" so that we can know them, name them, and make them serve us or exorcise them from our lives. Regardless of what you believe, demons are real— and so is our self-created salvation from them. It is fitting that Joe's baptismal name would be "Anthony." It was St. Anthony the hermit who spent his life tormented by and eventually overcoming a demonic assault, one so powerful that it was visible to those, even, who merely passed by his humble dwelling. The life of Joseph Lisiewski is about that struggle and redemption. This is his story as told to me. Let it guide you on as it has guided me.

Mark Stavish

17 July 2016

Wyoming, Pennsylvania

1

Pandora's Box

"Hello, is this Mark?"
"Yes," I replied.
"This is Joseph Lisiewski."

And so began our friendship late one Sunday night in May 2005, a friendship that would last until his death eleven years later. His call came at 9:00 pm sharp, or "2100 hours," as he liked to say. Lisiewski used military time; it fit his general demeanor. We spoke for about two to two-and-a-half hours, during which he told me of his friendships with Israel Regardie and Frater Albertus—two of the twentieth century's most pivotal esoteric figures. Off and on I could hear him lighting a cigarette or drinking tea. Lisiewski was a tea drinker for the most part, that or Coca-Cola. He didn't drink coffee, and alcohol was no longer on his list of refreshments.

Truth be told, my contact with Lisiewski began almost ten years earlier. During the period of 1996-98 I was involved with The Philosophers of Nature (PON), an alchemical and kabbalistic organization with many former Paracelsus Research Society (PRS) alumni among its members. PRS was established by Frater Albertus, author of several books, whose best-known title is *The Alchemist's Handbook*. First published

1 in 1960, *The Alchemist's Handbook*[1] has been translated into several languages and in print ever since. Lisiewski, although briefly affiliated with The Philosophers of Nature, apparently never attended any events, though he was known to many attendees from their PRS days, as well as from an article he published in *Essentia* (Vol. 3, Summer 1982). Edited by Art Kunkin, a publisher and author associated with the Chicago Free Press, *Essentia* was PRS's house

journal and included articles from students on the theoretical and practical work of alchemy. Lisiewski's article, "On the Generation of Animals," made uncharacteristic use of his full name, "Joseph C. Lisiewski, Jr.," in the by-line.

It was during this time in the late 1990s that I ran a small group, the Wyoming Valley Society for Esoteric Studies (WVSES), which would eventually become the Institute for Hermetic Studies. This group had sprung out of an alchemy workshop on August 3, 1996, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. It was held at the Elks Lodge, located at 325 South Street, near the corner of South Main Street. Russell House was the presenter, and his wife Sue accompanied him on the trip. While enthusiasm from those in attendance was mixed, there were a few who wanted to further their studies. As such, what would become the WVSES nineteen months later began moving into formation. Not so oddly, none of the people who wanted a study group would actually participate in it. Word of this group, however, would be in part what prompted Lisiewski to email me in the late summer of that year.

During this period, my wife Andrea (Nerozzi) and I were living at 58 Carey Avenue in Wilkes-Barre. The house we lived in was part of a duplex, often called a "double block," adjacent to where my maternal grandmother Freda Tischler Edmunds lived.

Her brother Edward had passed away in September of 1995. Previously, Andrea and I were living in Ithaca, New [1]Frater Albertus, *The Alchemist's Handbook* (Salt Lake City, UT: Paracelsus Research Society, 1960). Reprinted numerous times.

York, where she worked in a post-doctoral research position at a biology laboratory of Cornell University. As her first year came to an end, Andrea decided she did not enjoy the twelve-hour days—six and sometimes seven days a week—and wanted to leave. I was having trouble finding employment in a town that hosted Ithaca College and Cornell University, where the transient population was high, and nearly every post-doctoral researcher and professor seeking tenure

brought an unemployed spouse along with them. Competition for the most menial, low-paying jobs was fierce.

This lack of a fixed schedule did, however, have a few benefits. It was during this time that I was able to complete my first forty-two day "Hermetic Retreat" (the procedure given in *The Liturgy of Hermes*).[2] I also started what would be a life-long friendship with Dr. Joscelyn Godwin, meeting him on the Cornell campus. I contacted Dr. Godwin by mail after reading in David Fideler's *Alexandria: The Journal of the Western Cosmological Traditions* that Godwin lived a few hours north of me in Hamilton (New York). He called and we established a meeting. Afterwards he kindly sent me a copy of his book *Arktos: The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism, and Nazi Survival*, published by Fideler's Phanes Press. The inscription gives the date of our meeting as 20 July 1995—and as I write this I realize it was fifty-one years to the day of the attempted assassination of Adolf Hitler known as the "July Plot" in 1944, a fitting synchronicity given the title of the book.

Two months later I attended the "Rosicrucian Enlightenment Revisited Conference" in ˇCesk´y Krumlov, Czech Repub

lic. The event was sponsored by the New York Open Center (organized by the center's director Ralph White) and held in honor of Dame Francis Yates, author of *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (1972); this and other works by Yates helped push the academic study of esotericism out of the sidelines

[2]See Mark Stavish, *The Liturgy of Hermes: In Praise of the Lord of Light* (IHS Ritual Series #1).

and into the mainstream (even if ever so slowly). She was groundbreaking, and a pioneer in her own way.

It was while I attended the conference that my great-uncle Edward Tischler died.
Edward, or "Eddy" as we called him, was a member of several esoteric groups, including C. C. Zain's Brotherhood of Light, George

Winslow Plummer's Societas Rosicruciana in America (SRIA), the Martinist Order and Synarchy (later the Traditional Martinist Order), and the Rosicrucian Order (AMORC). Eddy joined AMORC in 1927 and was an active member, attending several regional and national conventions in the 1930s and 1940s. He contributed financially to building projects at "Rosicrucian Park" located in San Jose, California, and remained active in the local affiliated body until a few months before his death. I was among the three members who established the local body, Wilkes-Barre Pronaos, in 1984. Our regional membership covered a wide area of Eastern Pennsylvania, upwards of 125 members, although geography, level of interest, and personal schedules reduced that to seventy-five with about seven to ten of this group actually attending meetings.

The Pronaos was very active, holding an average of two seminars a year. Among our most popular presenters was David Burnett. In the early 1980s, Burnett became one of the first people actively involved in using Ericksonian hypnosis and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) in a personaland business-coaching setting. As a member and officer in AMORC, he was well known, liked, and respected across the Mid-Atlantic states as a regional officer and, later, district administrator. He would even serve as Grand Treasurer for the English Language Grand Lodge after the calamitous financial scandal and power plays that rocked this international organization to its knees. In Dave they were looking for someone they could trust, and they felt they had found the right person. Unfortunately for him, that trust could not be reciprocated, and he resigned from his volunteer position after years of service.

In 1992, the officers of the Townsend Pronaos asked me to give a seminar entitled "The Roots of the Western Mystery Traditions" at the Bon Secours Spiritual Center in Marriotsville, Maryland. We scheduled it for October 17 of that year, and to promote the show they arranged for me to appear on Robert Hieronimus's *Twenty-First Century Radio* show. Hieronimus was famous for his mural paintings and a book he wrote, *America's Secret Destiny: Spiritual Vision and the Founding of a Nation*, which explored the symbolism of the Great Seal of the United States. David Burnett was among those asked to write an

endorsement for the book.
Members of the Wilkes-Barre Pronaos performed the Rosicrucian Funeral Rite for Eddy, and upon returning from Europe I made arrangements to take care of his various ritualistic and esoteric belongings. It was approximately six months later that Andrea and I moved into his house to assist my grandmother as well as make plans for our future. The timing was good all around. At the time we moved from New York to Pennsylvania, little did I realize what a strange journey had begun to unfold.

The Conversation Continues[2]

"Hello Mark! It's Joe. How are you?" The voice came booming through the telephone receiver.

It was Sunday night, 9:30 pm, the air was crisp and clear, and it was the scheduled time Lisiewski and I had set for phone calls. At the time he was living near Lewisburg (PA); he would walk outside and stand on his porch as we conversed. I in turn would sit in my kitchen with the back door open, enjoying the night air. His speech was typically slow and measured, carefully choosing his words, except for when he quoted something from memory, at which time his voice would speed up as if reading a script (in some ways he was). His memory was very strong and detailed. On occasions when he would repeat a previous conversation or retell a story, it matched in sequence, language, and detail what was said previously. When he swore—and there was rarely a conversation after the first where he didn't—it was a torrent of fast, powerful, and at times colorful, even funny, language.

"I am good. I just got the children to bed, so we have an hour or so." The conversations rarely lasted an hour, one-anda-half to two hours was more common.

I spoke to Lisiewski on a handset from my home phone. He routinely used his cell phone. Background noise indicated

7 that he was often outside on his porch, taking time to wave or exchange a few words with a passing neighbor. Sometimes he was on a treadmill. I later found out that he had recently lost a great deal of weight through diet and exercise. I sat in a chair in my kitchen or dining room. His voice was sharp and direct, pausing at times to find the correct word before he increased the tempo to almost racing speeds, when an almost manic quality would overtake his speech.

During one of our earliest marathon sessions, Lisiewski spoke about how he had gotten started in magic.

"I remember getting this catalog in the mail. I was sixteen and had a post office box, and there it was—this catalogue, you remember the kind, like a small book with the title and description printed. I ordered A. E. Waite's *Black Magic and Pacts*, *The Encyclopedia of the Occult*, and Francis's [Israel Regardie] two-volume set of the *Golden Dawn*. Of course, it was not all at once, but over time."

I also remembered those early catalogues and their later offspring. Although fifteen years younger than Lisiewski, I came from a similar background and culture. We got along well because I had patience with him. I understood him and he knew that.

"These kids don't know how easy they have it," he stated, his voice gaining in tempo. "There were no books like this in the public library in 'coal country'! The goddamn Catholic priest would have been interrogating the librarian after Mass if it showed up on the shelves."

I laughed at that point, pausing long enough to insert a comment. "It was not that bad up here. There were some good books on the shelves of the local library. There were books by Joseph Murphy, Joseph Weed, and Maxwell Maltz. Some books on astrology and ESP, and once in a while one on witchcraft. In fact, one or two that I read as a kid are still there!"

"There was nothing, and I mean NOTHING like that here," he continued. "These kids order something on Amazon and—there it is! Delivered to you in two or three days! WE HAD TO WORK FOR IT. We had to search it out, save our money, go to the corner store for the money order, and then WAIT. Wait for it to arrive four to six weeks later. Then once it arrived WE had to make sense of it. Figure it out for ourselves. There were few 'step-by-step' guides like they have today.

"If we wanted a book sooner we had to hop a bus into New York City to get to Weiser's bookstore. God I remember the first time I walked in there." He paused for a moment. "I went straight to the back, to the used and rare section, just to see that such a collection existed. I then went through the store buying as many of the discounted damaged titles as I could afford because they were half-priced." I

could hear him taking a long drag on a cigarette followed by a drink of Coca-Cola. "Those were the days."
In 2003 while working at The Northeast Cancer Institute, located on the University of Scranton campus, I began studies on evocation. I would often have my lunch break in the library and take notes from either the books I was reading at the time or something from the shelves of their impressive occult collection. As a Jesuit-run university, this was no surprise. This research led me to obtain Lisiewski's landmark book soon after it was published the following year—the title that would make him a hero and a pariah among members of the occult community—*Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation*.[1]
In the early spring of 2005, prior to my contacting Lisiewski by way of his publisher New Falcon Press, I emailed Pat Zalewski. Zalewski was well known and widely respected in the Golden Dawn community, a community where real respect was often hard to come by. He had also published some titles with New Falcon Press. My concerns about contacting Lisiewski were straightforward; the introduction to his book

[1]Joseph C. Lisiewski, Ph.D., *Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 2004).

Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation had been written by S. Jason Black (David P. Wilson), a fellow who by his own admission claimed to have created a talisman to keep his roommate from getting a better job and moving out of their shared apartment. I found this action utterly reprehensible— if he is so good at magic, why not do a ritual to help himself get another roommate or more money to cover the rent rather than keep someone from getting a new job and remaining stuck where they do not want to be? I was hesitant to start communications with people who did not respect the freedom of others, no matter *how* good of a magician they were said to be. As I was told as a child, you can know a great deal about a person by the company he keeps. It came of no surprise to me to hear that, several years later, S. Jason Black was dead,

"found in his own vomit with no one to claim his corpse." I have attempted to verify the story, only to be told by one of his very close friends that Black experienced a "sad end."

"As you sow, so shall you reap" is the most important lesson in magic, one that we ignore at our own peril; it would be a reoccurring theme among those associated with Lisiewski.

Zalewski kindly wrote back, stating that he personally had gotten along fine with Alan Miller (a.k.a. "Dr. Christopher Hyatt"), though there was no love lost between he and "Nick Tharcher," Miller's partner at New Falcon. While he had spoken at length to Lisiewski twenty years earlier (when Lisiewski was tasked with editing Zalewski's *Secret Inner Order Rituals of the Golden Dawn*[2]), he had had no contact since. He encouraged communication with the suggestion that we "may have some very informative discussions about alchemy." With that advice I sent an email to New Falcon Press, and Lisiewski contacted me a few days later.

At the same time as my evocation research, I began putting together a series of notes on possible relationships between the "planetary hours" and the Paths of the Tree of

[2]Pat Zalewski (Joseph Lisiewski, ed.), *Secret Inner Order Rituals of the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, AZ: Falcon Press, 1988).

Life. Are there certain hours of the day or week that are more agreeable to the energies of the Paths? If so, how can they best be utilized? I mentioned this to Lisiewski, who told me that he had written a book on the same subject, *Kabbalistic Cycles and the Mastery of Life*.[3]

A few days later a signed copy arrived in the mail. The inscription, dated 19 May 2005, read: "To Mark Stavish, a fellow of the magical path. May you drink deeply of these waters. In friendship, Joseph C. Lisiewski, Ph.D."

While having known each other for only about a month, our weekly conversations had covered a great deal of esoteric territory, and on the fifth of June he asked me to write an endorsement for his forthcoming book, *The Magician's Handbook*.[4] By this time I had established a strong and stable reputation for myself in the field of esoteric publishing, but I had yet to publish any books. Being asked to write an endorsement for a book written by a former student of Regardie and Albertus was quite the compliment. I agreed, and wrote the following.

This is the first book every aspiring magician should study. Instead of the typical cookbook of magical ritual recipes, you are given the keys to what makes magic work. The suggested practical uses of the Tarot Trumps are themselves worth the price of the book.

My diary from June 5, 2005, states:

Interesting phone call from Joseph Lisiewski; he has phoned several times over the last few weeks. The conversations are pleasant and mostly about his experiences with Israel Regardie and Frater Albertus. I've contacted Jack Glass and Russ House and he checks out. Apparently he was good friends with Kurt Kobelarz [*sic*] and Hans Nintzel. I've agreed to write an endorsement for his next book *A Kabbalistic Handbook for the*

[3] Joseph C. Lisiewski, Ph.D., *Kabbalistic Cycles and the Mastery of Life* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 2004).

[4]Published as *A Kabbalistic Handbook for the Practicing Magician* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 2005).

Practicing Magician . It is poorly written but there are some real gems inside it. "Dr. Chris Hyatt" sent an autographed copy of *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic*, [which includes] Nintzel's and Lisiewski's articles on alchemy.

Hans Nintzel[5] and Lisiewski were close friends for many years. Lisiewski admired his commitment and contributions to the furthering of alchemy. "Hans was not much of a practicing alchemist in those days. Curt[6] and I would do the work and write up the lab reports, but Hans spent most of his time in the library copying books." While others I have spoken to have also politely called Nintzel's laboratory skills into question, it was clear that by the time I had met him in 1995 he was capable in the realm of spagyrics and basic mineral work. Over the course of their relationship Hans would also work with

Regardie and Albertus, becoming one of the foremost advocates and promoters of the study and practice of laboratory alchemy in the United States from the 1970s through 1990s, the period of his alchemical career. Hans was among Frater Albertus's earliest students, and completed Albertus's entire seven-year program.

While he published several articles on alchemy,[7] Hans may be best known for an essay on alchemy published in Israel Regardie's *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic*.[8] Hans also appeared under the entry for "Alchemy" in the Time-Life Series *Mysteries of the Unknown*.[9]

Hans would later play a critical role in helping to bring

[5] See Appendix B of the present text.

[6] Curt Coblarz-Schmidt; see below.

[7] Appearing in *Parachemy* (Spring and Fall 1977), *Essentia* (1982), *Gnosis* (Summer 1988), Adam McLean's *Hermetic Journal* (Spring and Summer 1980, 1981), and *Fate Magazine* (January 1991).

[8] Israel Regardie, *et al.*, *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic* (Phoenix, AZ: Falcon Press, 1985). Reprinted several times through 2009.

[9] This famed Time-Life series of thirty-three volumes ran from 1987 through 1991, breaking all of the company's sales records within the first fifteen months of its release.

The Philosophers of Nature (PON) to the United States, a task for which Jean Dubuis held Nintzel in high regard.

For reasons he never made clear, Joe stated that he kept in touch with Hans for several years, but then simply stopped opening his letters. "I have a stack of letters from Hans. I simply have not opened them. I don't know why. Maybe it is the past."

Over the course of their attendance at PRS, Joe, Hans, and Curt were often roommates, a circumstance which brings us to one of the more interesting stories of these "Three Musketeers," as Lisiewski called the trio. The psychic abilities of Frater Albertus became legendary. It was also well known that, despite his relationship with Regardie, at no time was any ceremonial magic to be performed on the grounds of the Paracelsus Research Society.

As Lisiewski told it:

One night Curt and I are in our dorm room. It is late, no one is up, and we perform the LBRP [Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram]. It was not loud nor a long protracted event, and it must have been around two or three in the morning. The next morning we get up and go to class in the lecture hall that Frater always used. We sat around the table waiting for him to enter, and he comes in. He is clearly upset, and states that "someone" had done magic on the grounds last night and that it was never to be done again, or they would be thrown out. I just sat there saying nothing, and I never did it again. There is no way he could have known what we were doing.

What makes the story all the more intriguing is that Lisiewski's relating of the events was actually the second time I had heard about it. The first person to mention this to me was Jack Glass, who was also attending PRS at the time. Strangely, while Lisiewski had no memory of Glass, Glass was very aware of him. Lisiewski was at PRS to learn, and if you fell outside that realm of activity, he took no interest in you. By his own admission he did very little socializing while attending PRS.

Curt Coblarz-Schmidt, however, was the exception. He and Joe got along fine, despite being very different in personality. I met Curt at the annual conferences held by The Philosophers of Nature in the 1990s. Curt was highly energetic, spoke fast, was constantly moving, and was very willing to share his experiences on the use of LSD with anyone who asked. His presentations were well attended, he was very intelligent, funny, and acted in the manner of a typical *puer æternus*.

Curt was a thin, wiry fellow. His upbringing had been hard; he was the eldest of a large family of children whom he was apparently responsible for. Curt slept little and gave very technical presentations on various aspects of alchemy, often inter-splicing them with electronics. He was a talented electrical engineer, although it is not clear if he received any formal training. He had been married at least once and was divorced with no children. He ran afoul of the law on several occasions for his production of LSD; he claimed that pure LSD was not harmful, that it was the impurities that were dangerous. Before he lost contact with those closest to him he fell on hard times.

Curt told several stories that were hilarious in their own right, and even better when he told them in his matter-offact style. One involved having created an Orgone Energy Accumulator (following the writings of Dr. Wilhelm Reich), which he mistakenly placed on top of his Enochian Tablet of Water. He stated that he had water problems all over his house for days until he realized what he had done. Another story involved his Chinese tutor, an older woman who did not look her age. Curt told us that she would sexually vampirize willing young men, who could be found passed out around her house at different times.

Joe had a terrible fondness for Curt, and tried to get him employment in Pennsylvania. Curt would have none of it, saying he did not like the cold and preferred the warmth of Southern California. As of 2010-2011, Joe believed that Curt was dead, given that all efforts to locate him had failed. Curt had a troubled life, and Lisiewski would often ask

me about him. I sensed that he wanted to get back in contact with Curt but did not know how. He stated that he did a few searches for him on the internet but was unable to find anything for certain. I found this hard to believe, and simply attributed it to Joe's not wanting to revisit the past—the same with the unopened letters from Hans that he kept for twenty years.

It was during these weekly, hours-long conversations that I would ask about other PRS alumni or people with whom Regardie was connected and with whom I had some modest relationship: Robert Bartlett, Chic and Sandra Cicero, Lon Milo DuQuette, and others. While his reasons were acceptable, they were by no means definitive. I remember saying to him:

"You know, Joe, people can change—even you." Over time it became clear to me that a primary characteristic defined Lisiewski's relationships: they were one-to-one, in which *he* was in control. This mirrored exactly how he engaged with both Regardie and Frater Albertus during the formative social years of his late teens and early twenties. This factor— coupled with a common recognition of the failure of occultism (primarily the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and the A ∴ A ∴) to develop into anything even remotely resembling its promised vision—would form a core part of any of his friendships.

A year or so after *Israel Regardie and the Philosopher's Stone* was published (2008) I received an email from a young woman who lived in Salt Lake City. I forwarded it to Lisiewski, who sent her a signed copy of the book. During their correspondence she sent photographs of the former PRS campus. The once vital and thriving center of alchemical research—the future home of Parachemy Industries, a producer of spagyric products that would be able to fund the educational arm of Albertus's vision—was now the office of a bail bondsman. This had a powerfully negative effect on Lisiewski that took some time for him shake off.

During this time he expressed some of the frustration that many others had:

Crowley left magic at different times in his life. Francis [Regardie] left it as well for a better part of his life while he built his practice after the Second World War, only to return in the 1960s. I have tried several times to leave, but it always pulls you back. And what do we get for it? When I think of what was done there!

His voice began rising in pitch as he continued:

Only to be a bail bondsman's office! You know, I hear about these people out there, some of whom I knew, trying to create all these alchemical schools and think that all that has happened is they have invested twenty or thirty years of their life into this work, have little or nothing to show for it, and are now justifying their lives. Pretending to be the master! When I knew them, they could not stand in Albertus's shadow! Now, it is like with each generation it gets weaker. What we went through. The sacrifices few will ever know.

Exhausted emotionally, silence followed.

The Golden Years[3]

In May and June 2006, Lisiewski sent me two documents outlining his curriculum for private instruction in magic and the occult. One, titled "Protocol for Instruction in Magic, Alchemy, and the Occult through the Oral Tradition," consisted of eight pages of detailed directions for those wishing private instruction (the only kind of instruction provided outside of his writings). The second was ten pages in length and consisted of a preliminary curriculum for magical training based on Regardie's books *Twelve Steps to Spiritual Enlightenment*[1] and *The Middle Pil lar*.[2]

The "Protocols" were written in his typical style: heavy use of bold, italics, and underlining of words and phrases to get his point across. The documents mention that in 2004 and 2005 he had "allowed" himself to be "goaded into" accepting students on a very informal basis, but felt that this did not work and subsequently established a strict protocol for study. Without this firm and guiding hand, Lisiewski believed—and rightly so—that, for many, esoteric instruction would simply

[1] Israel Regardie, *Twelve Steps to Spiritual Enlightenment* (Dallas, TX: Sangreal Foundation, 1969).

[2]Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar: A Co-Relation of the Principles of Analytical Psychology and the Elementary Techniques of Magic* (Chicago: Aries Press, 1945).

 be an afterthought.

In 2004 and 2005, I allowed myself to be goaded into offering private instruction (I had such a service in earlier years). However, this time, the individuals being tutored absolutely insisted on choosing their own number of hours per month due to their financial restraints—in short, they would call whenever they felt like it—and be as "loose" in their questionings as they liked. I thought this more "modern" approach might work. I was dead wrong. No one learned anything. It degraded into a New Age question-and-answer session, people trying to receive more time—at the expense of others—because ". . . I need your help desperately! I got myself into this trouble with my Magic, I can't get out of it, but I can't pay your fee! But

you just ***must*** help me anyway!" And I went along with all of it for far too long. This is not to mention the promises of being paid later, assurances that the check was in the mail, and attempts to give them more time for their money. I had one student tell me, "I just got back from a two-week Bermuda vacation! I can't possibly afford your fees now! How about cutting me a price break, because I have Magic to do!" Imagine that. After four months of this, I cancelled the program, refunded each participant the entire sums of money each paid, and swore it would never happen again. For not only did the above scenario make my private life a living hell, but my scientific research suffered to no end, and many personal projects had to be either shelved or outright scrapped. Such will **never** happen again.

Now, however, my books have taken off, and the need for ***genuine, consistent*** instruction in the Magic of the Old System, in Alchemy, and in the Occult, has risen once more. After due consideration and analysis of the past situation and the mistakes I made—and after a barrage of earnest requests from serious students—and after having learned from my own hard, bitter experience—I resurrected an Instructional Program—as offered here—that will work for all concerned, just as it did when I first used it in the late 1980s. It also assures that each individual receives exactly what they need, without taking time away from those others I am mentoring at the same time, and without driving me to the brink of madness.

The price for instruction was sixty dollars for a thirtyminute session or $100 for an hour. Students had to sign on for a minimum of three months, payable in advance. On February 1, 2006, Lisiewski had launched "8^{th} Matrix Press" and was using its website as his public email address. 8^{th} Matrix Press functioned as a medium whereby readers could ask questions and obtain subscriptions to his forthcoming quarterly journal, *Howlings from the Pit: A Journal of Old System Magic, Theurgy, and Goetia*. This was a very active period for Lisiewski and, by extension, for myself. Between my own writing and almost daily calls from him, I was hipdeep in occult research and publishing. The phrase "Old System Magic" had now made it into the modern occult vernacular. A variety of electronic newsgroups focused around his work were established by adoring fans—as well as vitriolic opponents—and his principal idea of using the grimoires in an unadulterated form received commentary from both groups.

As a result of his consistent disregard for the "New Age" and its various eclectic methods of working, one of the stranger items I have been asked about regarding Lisiewski's choice of reading materials for his students comes from his student protocols:

Please be aware that no discussions, questions, or advice concerning New Age books, authors, ideas, or their conjectures will be answered by me. Those who enter into this Program of Instruction will be—by nature of entering into the program— quite astute in these matters, and will certainly be aware of those books and authors that are New Age. Clearly, the bulk of such authors fall into that period from the year 1900 onward, the year the original Golden Dawn Temple in London collapsed. The only exceptions to this period are the works of A. E. Waite, Israel Regardie (including the Golden Dawn as ***original ly*** laid down by him), Frater Albertus, Stephen Skinner, Francis King, Donald Tyson's translation [*sic*] of Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* and *TETRAGRAMMATON*, and a few other scattered works, including occult encyclopedias (John Michael Greer) and reference works (David Godwin). While in fact I hold no special grudges against a number of New Age authors **per se**, taken as a **collective unit**, the misinformation and confusion created by **many** others of the New Age class have skewed the field so badly, as to make it impossible to separate the wheat from the chaff. This is why I rail against it to such an extent.

Lisiewski had a peculiar liking for Waite, mostly born of the fact that Crowley hated him, and the fact that he saw Waite as a man similar to himself. Like Lisiewski, Waite came from the lower socio-economic strata and worked his way up. He was—not unlike Lisiewski, despite his formal university education—essentially self-taught, and broke ground in an area for the most part ignored. A strong case can be made for Waite being one of the earliest proponents of academic esotericism. At one point we spent an hour or so discussing R. A. Gilbert's biography *A. E. Waite: Magician of Many Parts*.[3] Lisiewski even briefly entertained the idea that he might have been Waite's reincarnation, not unlike Crowley's belief that he had previously been ´Eliphas L´evi.

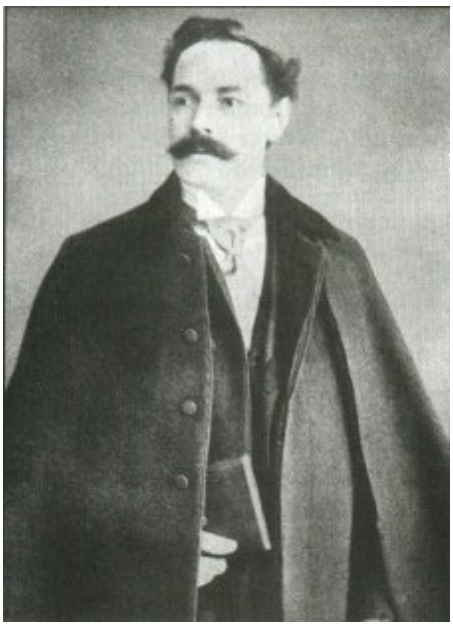
As he confided to me in one late-night conversation:

I don't know. When I look at his [Waite's] picture I feel something. I went out and found a copy of his biography *A. E. Waite: Magician of Many Parts*, by Gilbert. It was expensive, I paid $100 for it. It felt very familiar. As I said, pay attention to what he doesn't say, or what he says to ignore, and there you will find the secret to what he is talking about. Maybe I know this because that is the way I wrote it as Waite?

My reply was simple: "Joe, even if you are Waite, it doesn't matter. You are you, and that means you are the best you have ever been. It is best to stay in the present."

As for Tyson, that is somewhat unclear to me, even now. Viewing him as a theoretical and *not* a practical occultist, he did admire his efforts to make Agrippa more accessible, a feeling shared by Jean Dubuis. It is possible that Lisiewski believed that the information in *Tetragrammaton*[4] was simple

[3] R. A. Gilbert, *A. E. Waite: Magician of Many Parts* (Wellingborough, UK: Crucible, 1987).
[4]Donald Tyson, *Tetragrammaton: The Secret to Evoking Angelic Powers and the Key to the Apocalypse* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1996). Reprinted as *The Power of the Word: The Secret Code of Creation* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 2004).



Arthur Edward Waite

and easy to perform. As for the idea that the purpose of Enochian magic is to function as a mechanism for ushering in the Apocalypse, Lisiewski simply rationalized this away in the context of his general dislike for Enochian (although he would return to it several years later). This dislike was based on the fact that both John Dee and

Edward Kelley came to particularly unenviable ends. Their lives were wrecked by the spirits, if we are to believe that they indeed did communicate with spirits, and Kelley was driven to the edge of madness by Dee's obsession with possessing a mechanism that would give him virtual omniscience.

This notion of the fundamental failure of the great magicians was a theme he would bring up often, having only praise for ´Eliphas L´evi: "All the rest were broke, but L´evi, he was not rich, nor poor, but always had enough." How he had come to this conclusion I never asked. However, it demonstrated that the efficacy of magic to affect the material world was always at the forefront of his experiential and experimental practices.

Despite his tone, the years from 2004 until 2011 were the "golden years" for Lisiewski, reflected in his status as a public figure in the occult community. During this time he published eight books: five on practical magic (he did not like the terms "esotericism" or even "occult" that much, preferring specific terms such as "alchemy" and "ritual magic") and three horror novels rooted in his experiences and research into the fundamental nature of reality.

Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation brought Lisiewski into the broader magical audience. Despite his pedigree, his previous publications were limited to two very specific articles in the alchemical journal from PRS, *Essentia*. While he was critical to the editing of several publications on the Golden Dawn and magic by Christopher Hyatt through Falcon Press (c. 1979), other than appropriate credit for his part, nothing else appeared with his name on it. Once *Ceremonial Magic* appeared in 2004, it was quickly followed by *Kabbalistic Cycles and the Mastery of Life* and *A Kabbalistic Handbook for the Practicing Magician* in 2005. *Israel Regardie and the Philosopher's Stone: The Alchemical Arts Brought Down to Earth* was published on January 1, 2009 (New Year's Day being a re-occurring date for important themes in Lisiewski's life and

my friendship with him) followed by *Howlings from the Pit* in the spring of 2011.[5]

The Regardie biography was written across the summer of 2007. However, the illness and eventual death of Lisiewski's long-time friend and publisher, Alan Miller (Christopher Hyatt), in February 2008 would mean that release of the book would be delayed until January 2009.

[5] Joseph C. Lisiewski, Ph.D. (Mark Stavish, ed.), *Howlings from the Pit: A Practical Handbook of Medieval Magic, Goetia & Theurgy* (Tempe, AZ: Original Falcon Press, 2011).

The period of the death of Hyatt struck Lisiewski hard, as it was Alan that he had relied upon over a decade earlier during his struggles with alcohol and the reckless behaviors that accompanied it. Hyatt died of cancer, aged 64 years, on February 9, 2008, in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he lived with his wife Linda and worked with his partner in publishing, Lee Rosenstein (a.k.a. Nick Tharcher).

I spoke with Hyatt on several occasions, always in reference to Lisiewski's book projects and my part in them. We discussed the possibility of my writing something for New Falcon Press, but other than my contributions to Lisiewski's works, nothing came of it.

Hyatt's death also created a bit of a vacuum at New Falcon, and a very public fight for control of the company and the titles it published broke out, with Miller's surviving spouse Linda and his business partner Rosenstein on one side and Miller's estranged son, Michael Miller, on the other.

— The Sons of Horus —

The establishment of The Original Falcon Press was announced on June 14, 2008—four months after Alan's death. At stake was who controlled the right to publish the titles under the New Falcon imprint. While it may appear a simple matter of business succession, the conflict for control quickly escalated into a very public feud with charges and countercharges appearing across the internet. Michael

Miller based his claim to ownership on a change made to Alan's Last Will and Testament two weeks before he died. According to Rosenstein, Alan's son Michael could not be the legal owner of New Falcon Press because his father was not in a position to give it to him; as Rosenstein had it, the

"parent" of New Falcon Publications is "The United States Ecclesiastical Society and Seminary" (USESS), a California corporation established in 1981 (thus, if you will, New Falcon Publications is a DBA/subsidiary of USESS). USESS is a nonprofit religious organization, and as such Alan did not and **could not**..."own" it: non-profit organizations cannot be "owned" by anyone. (Among other things, that means that he couldn't, and didn't, "leave" it to anyone in his "will" or in a "trust" or in any other way.)[6]

Numerous photographs of documents are included on the website,[7] suggesting that the church and seminary established in 1981 was the owner, with Alan Miller in charge—it was not his personal property. Tharcher claimed that in 1995 he was designated the sole successor to Miller (including a document to support his claim) and that this had never been changed. In short, New Falcon was what is called the "profit center" of a non-profit organization, the Church and Seminary, and therefore Miller had no legal right to transfer it to his son. Tharcher further states (with supporting documents) that at the time of the changes in his will, Hyatt/Miller was incompetent as a result of the advanced stage of his illness and medical treatment.

This kind of battle was nothing new to the occult community; it has been the undoing of various organizations since the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and the entire

"Occult Revival" began near the end of the nineteenth century. As news broke of Michael Miller being placed on administrative leave from his position at Los Angeles City College on May 21, 2009, the battle quickly became very unsavoury. This was in part due to a federal investigation focused around the shredding of documents and destruction of evidence that may have implicated Miller in fraud. The accusations expanded, with claims of videotaping players in the

bathroom of his private residence, inappropriate contact, and, finally, Miller's arrest on October 27, 2014.[8] I was never able to determine

[6] Posted, Thursday, June 26, 2008, "How Michael Miller Came to Be 'In Charge' of New Falcon," by Nick Tharcher. See http://www.newfalconpublications.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f= 3&t=2 (accessed July 21, 2016).

[7] Cf. previous footnote.

[8] See http://www.newfalconpublications.com/forum/viewtopic.php?

the outcome of all of these allegations against Miller, or to separate the wheat from the chaff. My limited communication with the Los Angeles Police Department proved unproductive, as they stated "privacy laws" prohibited them from discussing what had become a closed case.

To better understand this inter-family squabble and its impact on Lisiewski—given that he spoke to me at length about it—all of the events leading up to it must be understood. To do this we need to look at the personal relationships between each of the men involved and the man who was really at the core of it all: Israel Francis Regardie. The legal battle over control of Falcon Press was just the most recent fight in a long list of conflicts. In many ways it was just the natural process that seemed to have ingratiated itself into the occult community which had grown up around the Golden Dawn ever since its inception in 1888. For Lisiewski, however, it began almost a hundred years later.

As mentioned previously, Regardie began the work of practical alchemy after meeting Frater Albertus, but this work was taken up in connection with Lisiewski acting as their mutual student.

Lisiewski's connection to the Golden Dawn community was well established in the mid- to late-1980s. In 1984 he contributed a lengthy article on alchemy and Frater Albertus, including discussion of various experiments undertaken with him, to *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic* (published, as noted previously, by New Falcon Press). Later, he is listed on the cover as the editor of *Secret*

Inner Order Rituals of the Golden Dawn by Patrick Zalewski (Falcon Press, 1988); earlier, he contributed an article to *An Interview with Israel Regardie: His Final Thoughts and Views* (edited by Christopher S. Hyatt), at the conclusion of which an article on alchemy by Regardie appears. The book was published in April 1985, a month after Regardie's death and only a short

f=2&t=115&hilit=michael+miller+arrested (accessed July 21, 2016).

time after the completion of the interview it contains. In the 1993 edition of *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn* by Israel Regardie, Lisiewski is listed first in the section titled "Some Modern Adepts of the Golden Dawn." His article, "Subtle is the Way: A Personal Portrait of Israel Francis Regardie by Joseph Lisiewski 5°=6 ," consists of a summary of his experiences with Regardie. In it he includes an anecdote of his period in the A ∴ A ∴ (Argenteum Astrum), which ran from approximately 1972 to 1975.

It was not long after our first meeting that Francis introduced me to the Head of the A ∴ A ∴ (Argenteum Astrum), a Magical Order based on the works of Aleister Crowley, which were actually derived from the Golden Dawn. I began as Secretary of the Order for two years, and was finally promoted to the post of Chancellor of the Order, second only to Its Visible Head. This lasted for two years, until the Visible Head and I had a severe, public break, which initiated hundreds of letters spread between Regardie, the Visible Head, and myself. Regardie was delighted!

The rift which finally produced the break-up of the A ∴ A ∴ was due to "alchemical reasons." For it was during this episodic period with my association with the A ∴ A ∴ that Regardie introduced me to Frater Albertus (Dr. Albert Richard Riedel), the President and Head Lecturer of the Paracelsus Research Society, Utah Institute of Parachemistry, Salt Lake City, Utah. ...I was admitted to that select group of students which numbered only twelve per year.[9]

He states that Regardie wanted to have alchemy introduced into the curriculum of study of the A ∴ A ∴ but that this was met with resistance.

This was my task. And so it was done. When I introduced it [laboratory alchemy] into the A∴ A∴, I met with the enormous resistance hinted at earlier, not only from the Visible Head of the Order but the constituency as well. Everyone insisted on delving into "Spiritual Alchemy"

albeit an important but secondary form of physical laboratory manifestation. The rift brought me to leave the A ∴ A ∴ and, soon after that, it dissolved.

[9] Israel Regardie (foreword by Christopher Hyatt), *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1993) 202.

Once again, Regardie took me under his wing, so to speak, and agreed the A ∴ A ∴ had degraded.[10]

Lisiewski finishes his essay by signing it:

Joseph C. Lisiewski

Adeptus Minor

Chief Alchemical Consultant of the Hermetic Temple and Order of the Golden Dawn February, 1987[11]

This effort to introduce practical laboratory alchemy into the curriculum of the Golden Dawn and the A ∴ A ∴ is particularly important, especially in light of the fact (previously mentioned) that Frater Albertus was adamant about ritual magic *not* being practiced at PRS. According to Lisiewski, this relationship or possible conflict between operative alchemy and ritual magic as a point of contention between Albertus and Regardie was a partial source of the rupture between the two men.

While efforts at integrating alchemy and magic failed during Regardie's lifetime, to further efforts at creating an academy for the training of elite adepts, the Golden Dawn Society (a.k.a. "The Golden Dawn Temple and Society"), in connection with Dr. Christopher Hyatt, and the "Collegium of Mystagogues" were founded on April 11, 1985. It is unclear what relationship it had with the Israel Regardie Foundation (established after the death of Regardie a month earlier). Both organizations were products of Hyatt and appear to be focused around similar goals. Possibly, the main difference consisted of the Society functioning as a teaching and initiatic organization while the Foundation dedicated itself to preserving the memory and work of Regardie. The goal of the

[10]*Ibid.*

[11]*Ibid.* 203.

Christopher S. Hyatt (Alan Miller)

Society was to create an elite institution for the furtherance of occultism, which clearly included laboratory alchemy. It is unclear what became of it; it may very well have been absorbed by other Golden Dawn groups after the death of Hyatt in February 2008. There are posts on the internet from 2008 and 2009 claiming to be from both organizations, also announcing the formation of a "Regardie O.T.O.," but nothing more recent has been discovered that suggests current activities of any of the aforesaid groups.

The Israel Regardie Foundation was an extension of the United States Ecclesiastical Society and Seminary (USESS), a non-profit seminary established by Hyatt in California in 1981. USESS was the named address for all financial contributions to the Foundation, with all memorabilia to be sent to Phoenix, Arizona. More recently it has come to light[12] that the USESS was or is also the parent corporation of New Falcon Press, which experienced legal difficulties after the death of Hyatt. Currently New Falcon Press is run by Michael Miller, the son of Alan Miller/Christopher Hyatt; Original Falcon Press is run by Hyatt's long-time business partner and friend Lee Rosenstein/Nick Tharcher. A check with Guidestar (an online

[12]See quote from Nick Tharcher on pages 23-24 of the present text.

non-profit resource) lists USESS as located in Santa Monica, California, and having received its IRS ruling in 1983. Its status as a church means that it is not required to file an annual return with the IRS, and lists its income and assets at zero dollars. Based on this information, it would appear that neither the Israel Regardie Foundation, the Golden Dawn Society and Temple, nor the new addition, the Regardie O.T.O., achieved their publicly stated spiritual or material goals.

Complicated relations indeed!

The comments given above delineate an important phase in the understanding and inclusion of alchemy within the development of the modern Golden Dawn (and to a much lesser degree the A ∴ A ∴ and O.T.O.). They represent what are now historical events—events, however, that for Lisiewski not only demonstrated the essential failure of occultism to achieve anything of merit collectively, but possibly of the entire system as a whole.

Adventures in Publishing[4]

On June 24, I signed and returned my contract with Llewellyn for the publishing of my first book, *The Path of Alchemy: Energetic Healing and the World of Natural Magic*.[1] Lisiewski returned my earlier favor and contributed a rare endorsement for my book. I do not believe he has written endorsements for any books other than mine. *The Path of Alchemy* was quickly followed by *Kabbalah for Health and Wel lness*.[2] In fact, both titles were under discussion simultaneously, and it was only two weeks later that the manuscript for *Kabbalah* was sent to Llewellyn for review. When the cover art for *Kabbalah for Health and Wel lness* arrived for me to review, I sent an email to both Carl Weschcke and Bill Krause, President of Llewellyn, to thank them for their efforts and show my appreciation for the original artwork. The cover was very different from typical books on Western Kabbalah, reflecting both the healing nature of its contents and the untapped female audience we were reaching out to. However, during the summer of 2006, efforts to get Llewellyn to publish my third

[1] Mark Stavish, *The Path of Alchemy: Energetic Healing and the World of Natural Magic* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2006).

[2]Mark Stavish, *Kabbalah for Health and Wellness* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2007). This title has now been released in a revised, updated second edition through the Institute for Hermetic Studies (2017).

31 title—*Between the Gates: Lucid Dreaming, Astral Projection, and the Body of Light in Western Esotericism*[3]—got very muddled. The title was quickly picked up by Weiser, who had recently been acquired by Red Wheel Publishing. Llewellyn would, however, publish my fourth book, *Freemasonry: Rituals, Symbols, and History of the Secret Society*,[4] the following year.

By then, Lisiewski's influence on my approach to esotericism, along with my approach to daily life, had solidified. Here, for the first time, I made a clear and unambiguous statement about the importance of distinguishing between objective and subjective phenomena. I felt that this was important so that the groundwork for discussion around these themes could be advanced within the contemporary esoteric scene—a scene that for far too long had focused its attention almost exclusively on the subjective side of things.

Much of the negative reaction to Lisiewski's first book, *Ceremonial Magic & the Power of Evocation*, concerned its forceful, definitive, and uncompromising tone. This approach was simply a mirror of how Lisiewski approached everything— full on, and damn the consequences. Since I did not have to live with him, it was irrelevant to our relationship who or how many people he directly offended, or who took offence to his writings. The fact that I never absorbed anything he said as a personal slight was a trait that he both recognized and appreciated. More than once he said to me, "You know why we get along so well? It's like we are two sides of the same coin. I am the bad cop and you are the good cop." Later on he would add, "I wish I could be a little more like you." I took the compliment for what it was. In fact, I also told him that over the years I became a little more like him.

[3] Mark Stavish, *Between the Gates: Lucid Dreaming, Astral Projection, and the Body of Light in Western Esotericism* (San Francisco: Red Wheel/Weiser, 2008).

[4]Mark Stavish, *Freemasonry: Rituals, Symbols, and History of the Secret Society* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2007).

— Calls From Beyond The Grave —

Near the middle of June in 2006 Lisiewski called. This time it was in the morning around 9:00 am. Apparently his insomnia was active again; 9:00 am was at least better than some of his other calls (often occurring around midnight), and since I had the time, we spoke

about the Regardie/Albertus book. I ended up sending him two papers that I had written:

"The History of Alchemy in America" and "Introduction to Alchemy: A Golden Dawn Perspective."

He phoned again around 7:30-8:00 pm to very kindly comment on the Golden Dawn alchemy paper: "This was like reading my old class notes from PRS. I had no idea you were so far along." He went on to say that he was no longer sure any more about the existence or possibility of achieving the Philosopher's Stone. Yet, he went on to say that he believed Albertus and Betty were/are Richard and Isabella Ingalese, that Betty did not age for fifteen or more years, and that he believed Frater Albertus faked his own death. I took this all in stride; I did, however, remember that Jack Glass had told me at an earlier time that Albertus himself had strongly suggested that he was Richard Ingalese. Before concluding the call I promised to mail him Hans Nintzel's class notes from PRS so that he could make a copy of them. For some reason he did not want anyone to copy them but me; given that the pages numbered about 425, this was somewhat excessive for me at the time, so I told him I would send the originals and he could do it himself.

In addition to complimenting me on the papers, Lisiewski stated that the work with the planetary seals I had done was exceptional, and that he no longer felt he had to "hold back" when we talked. The work in question was a series of experiential operations to work with the planetary seals in a traditional folk magic manner. I also came to believe that he no longer had anyone with whom he could discuss and share these things, as many of his old associates (who were but few in number) were gone.
This was a difficult time for me as well.
I received an email stating that Susan B. Layne (n´ee

Laferriere) had died of lymphoma on Saturday at Mercy Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania. She was 46 years old. Originally from Woonsocket, Rhode Island, she moved to Honesdale, Pennsylvania,

just prior to Andrea and I moving to Providence, Rhode Island, in 1989. Susan was instrumental to my writing and publishing (as PDFs) the papers I had sent Lisiewski as part of the "Institute for Hermetic Studies Special Reports" concerning various esoteric topics. These same papers would eventually come to form the basis of the current IHS Monograph Series.

In addition to this, the Susquehanna River had threatened to flood the Wyoming Valley. The last major flood was in 1972; at the time, it was the largest natural disaster to hit the United States. This time the river crested on June 30 at thirty-four feet. There was massive damage to low-lying areas, but the levees held. For many, a bullet was dodged yet again.

Over the next few months, a variety of technical aspects were discussed with Lisiewski, and details given on the creation of the seven glasses of antimony, a topic he discussed in his book on Regardie and Albertus. Lisiewski mentioned that at PRS they had undertaken a series of experiments using electricity to create Philosophical Mercury out of metallic mercury (Hg). The first was White Mercury, from which were extracted the seeds for the Red Mercury. The amount needed was phenomenal, as only a few "seeds" or "grains" of Red could be extracted from the White. As a result we discussed the costs involved in that path (resulting in my publishing an essay regarding this in VOXHERMES).

On July 3, 2006, Lisiewski called some time in the afternoon and recommended Franz Hartmann's *Cosmology*,[5] published by Health Research Associates. The book was an

[5]Franz Hartmann, *Cosmology; or, Universal Science...* (Boston: Occult Publishing Co., 1888).

alternate version of *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians*,[6] but included a glossary and color plates. The more well-known edition published by the Ancient Mystical Order Rosæ Crucis (AMORC) was easier to read and larger, but did not have any color or indicators of what the

colors should be. While classes were occasionally held at the Rose+Croix University International in San Jose, California, where students would color in copies (similar to the practice BOTA used for the study of the tarot), I had not attended any of the sessions. Fortunately, I knew people who had, as well as those who had seen the copies that Harvey Spencer Lewis personally colored. With the photographs in my possession, I was able to compare the AMORC version with that given by Hartmann, and even with an earlier one available online from the University of Minnesota.

On Saturday, July 8, 2006, I received a strange phone call from Lisiewski. He was anxious and upset, stating that he was not even sure if he should call me, but that his wife Darlene said he should. It was about 7:00 pm and Andrea, our sons Luke and Nathaniel, and our longtime family friend Ed had yet to finish dinner.

Joe stated that he received a phone call around 9:00 am, waking him up. His wife was up and heard the phone ring as well. The voice on the other end of the line asked him three questions known only to Joe and Frater Albertus; it then asked, "Now do you know who this is?" The voice proceeded to tell him that he must complete his books on alchemy, and that "your friend Mark Stavish must continue writing and direct his attention towards alchemy." The conversation then ended. Joe mentioned on a previous occasion that he believed he ran into Frater Albertus in a small grocery store in or near Baltimore in 1984.

What makes this of interest is that on the previous night,

[6] Many editions; reprinted by Kessinger Publishing (1998) and AMORC (1967). Original publication: Altona (Hamburg, Germany) in 1785 and 1788.

less than twenty-four hours from the time of his call, I had a dream regarding Joe and Albertus in which I said, "Why don't you just ask him?" Later in the day I was looking at Albertus's *QBL*[7] and *From "One" to "Ten"*[8] when I noticed that—despite being published in

1984, "the year of his death"—the copyright given was "1981 – The Estate of Frater Albertus." Nineteen eighty-one was the year the seven-year course curriculum came to an end, and the first and only three-year series of classes began, ending in 1984. Joe stated that during this time Albertus occasionally acted peculiar, emphasizing to the students present: "those who have ears, listen."

With summer drawing to a close, Andrea was preparing to start teaching again and we were both preparing to send Luke and Nathaniel back to school. I was told near the end of August that *Publishers Weekly* would feature *The Path of Alchemy* on the cover of their September 4, 2006, issue. Three weeks later I was in London at the invitation of movie producer/director Guy Ritchie for the taping of several hours of interview on Kabbalah and related topics. My flight was a nightmare, yet somehow I arrived just an hour later than scheduled. My stay was short, under three days, but I managed to arrange for a whirlwind tour of the famous Atlantis Bookshop, the British Museum, and the United Grand Lodge of England. Atlantis Bookshop is the oldest occult bookstore in London, established in 1922 by Michael Houghton. While there I met the owner, Geraldine Beskin, and managed to get a picture of myself standing before the famous portrait of a crowned MacGregor-Mathers holding one of the Fire Wands that was said to have been rescued from a cache that surfaced during the Second World War.

[7] Frater Albertus, *The Seven Rays of the QBL* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1985).
[8]Frater Albertus, *From "One" to "Ten": A Treatise on the Origin and Extension of the Prime Manifestation on the Physical Plane* (Salt Lake City, UT: Paracelsus Research Society, 1966).

Ms. Beskin continued to work as she spoke to me, opening a box that had been delivered a few minutes earlier. Much to my pleasure, she pulled out copies of *The Path of Alchemy*.

The second half of 2006 was a very busy time for me and very productive. Lisiewski and I continued to speak regularly during times both scheduled and impromptu. It was during one of those

unexpected calls that I was able to allow Lisiewski to speak to someone from his past.

Several months earlier I had invited James Wasserman to speak about the Knights Templar at "The Masonic Reading Society." His talk was to be held at the Westmoreland Club, South River Street, Wilkes-Barre (PA), and was sponsored in part by funding from PNC Bank. Prior to this I had never met Wasserman, and the meeting turned out to be very fortuitous for both of us. His presentation would later become the basis for his historical novel *Divine Warriors: The Birth of Heresy*.[9] As we were standing in my kitchen preparing to leave for

"the Club" my phone rang—it was Lisiewski. I put the two of them on the phone to talk as I finished collecting a few items. This was the first time the two of them had spoken since 1980. This theme of estrangement was one I would encounter repeatedly with Joe.

By early December, I had managed to complete *Freemasonry: Rituals, Symbols, and History of the Secret Society*, and to send it off to Llewellyn. This was my fourth book in two years. Demands for more quickly poured in, and for a period of time I was getting very regular emails from Carl Weschcke. These were polite, jovial, and focused around new book ideas. There was a great deal of enthusiasm on Carl's part, but my desire to spend what was the equivalent of three months' full-time work writing a book for what was being offered to me was waning. I had established myself as an au

[9] This is the title of the hardcover edition. It is also available in paperback: James Wasserman (with Keith W. Stump and Harvey Rochman), *Templar Heresy: A Story of Gnostic Illumination* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 2017).

thor. I was able to get modest advances from publishers and, to some degree, I could also negotiate better contracts. In the end, this was a niche market and the only people making any real money off the sale of a book were the publishers. Carl was doing his job of attempting to groom me as a potential workhorse in his stable of

authors, and when it became clear I had ideas for new books but no intention at the moment of writing them, the correspondence from him ceased.

Freemasonry would become a bit of a "problem child" for me personally, as while it did well in the international market (with translations into Estonian, French, Portuguese, and Spanish), it dragged domestically. This was, in my mind, primarily due to the publisher's decision to experiment with

"print-on-demand" using several titles— *Freemasonry* being one of them. While the book is exceptional, this new strategy pushed the cover price above what is called a "price point," where readers became hesitant to purchase it. Of course, this does not matter if you are not holding inventory, as it is no physical loss to the publishers, but it ended up causing a reduction in sales, and thereby in royalties for me as the author. I attempted to address this with the publisher several times, but to no avail.

It was increasingly clear that—despite all the talk of human evolution, spiritual unfoldment, and a host of other euphemisms—esoteric publishing was a small market in a big industry aimed at an audience less concerned with selfknowledge and more with self-gratification. I understood the needs of the publishers to make money, as I obviously did those of the authors. What became apparent was the (deservedly) actual disregard that many individuals inside the industry had for the audience they sought to sell to. Readership in esoteric publishing is viewed with no discrimination, as if the publishers were selling cosmetics or politics—and these latter two were often included to hook the primarily female demographic into purchasing more product. Let us be reminded that this "product"—if truly effective—would negate any further need to purchase more books on the same subject—all in an effort to fulfill the goals and promises of the previous two dozen self-help books that were bought and read.

During this period Lisiewski increasingly complained to me about interactions with his own publishers, including his old friends at Falcon. While I took much of it with a grain of salt, overall it matched what I had heard from others in the industry. It was also during this period that I wrote an outline and sample chapters for a book on the New Age Movement titled *The Prophecies of Peter Pan: 2012 and Never, Never Land*. The book was designed as a soft expos´ on the realities of "contemporary spirituality" as the multibillion-dollar industry that it is. Several major publishers were interested and discussed the title with me. The conversations went cold when they found out it was less about personalities and more about business practices—*their* business practices. There was nothing illegal being divulged or discussed; I simply put on display the gap between what is said, what is done, and what can actually be delivered.

Spirituality has always been a marketable commodity. The ever-expanding need to pander to a feckless and foolish audience only makes the situation worse. Authors say things to one another which few (myself excepted) would ever admit to or put into print. What I did see, though—and what Lisiewski also saw which further embittered him—was the infantile and pathological game played by publishers, authors, and readers. The publishers' financial "needs" coupled with those of the authors created a condition where everyone was trying to distinguish themselves from their competitors—to carve out a niche in an already niche market. This combined with the desperation (along with a sense of superiority and entitlement) of a general readership results in a witch's brew of toxic proportions. Is it any wonder that "alternative spirituality" is not taken seriously? Here again waxed the perennial lesson: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

5

Alchemy

It was after the success of his book *Israel Regardie and the Philosopher's Stone* that Lisiewski revisited the idea of writing a course on practical alchemy based upon his notes from the seven years he attended PRS. I spent a tremendous amount of time with him bouncing back and forth between whether to publish monthly course work or a book, and—if a book— whether to self-publish or use an established publisher.

"You know, Mark, this work demands effort, sacrifice. It is a tremendous amount of work for me to write a book. Maybe monthly lessons would be better. Students would subscribe for maybe $100 a month and with that they could get thirty minutes of consultation if they needed it." I could hear him through the phone. His breathing was a little labored. The sound of a passing car let me know that he was walking outside and not on his treadmill, from where he would occasionally call me.

"How many years would the course run?" I asked.

"It would have to be at least three, but probably seven, just like Frater did," he replied.
"That is a lot of money. People are going to drop out and you're going to get upset with them. You're better off publishing it as a book or series of books."

To this end, I introduced him to several people at Red Wheel/Weiser. What started out enthusiastically took a bad turn after a month or so, and one day I was told he did not want to work with Weiser, but would publish the books himself. This began an extensive and

detailed search for not only various print-on-demand publishers but also the possibility of his purchasing print-on-demand technology for upwards of $200,000! Eventually, sanity was regained, and he went with Author House as his choice for self-publishing. This was, of course, not without its issues. It was becoming increasingly clear to me that almost nothing Lisiewski entered into was smooth sailing. Everything had problems that seemed to be beyond the range of normalcy. He would eventually publish his novels with Author House and the idea of becoming a publisher would recede into the background.

During this time he told me that he had spent upwards of $100,000 on advertising in the *New York Times* to promote earlier publishing endeavors. If true, this seemed little more than foolish, but I did not ask him about it any further. At his request, I did send copies of his books to several people I knew who worked in the movie industry, as he was hoping for a movie option. It was here that he increasingly began to make promises that he would not (because he could not) keep. He would often say to me, "Mark, if I get a movie contract out of this you will not have to worry! You will be taken care of. I promise, and I always keep my word."

His attention began to turn back to operative alchemy. "It has been a while since I have been in an alchemical lab. After the Water Work and the Homunculus I packed everything up and put it away. I still have it all. The little plant stones in those plastic film containers. But I need antimony. Do you have a source?" he asked.

The heroic search began once more, and with it detailed conversations about the various qualities and types of antimony. "At PRS Frater got antimony fume from a nearby processing plant. The fume was taken from the smokestacks.

It ranged from very pure like white ash to gray and dirty depending on where it was taken from within the smokestack." I remembered

Jack Glass telling several of us the same story; he had even presented me with some of the antimony fume he had collected during his PRS days. After extensive investigations for a domestic supplier over the course of a month, he asked me (for reasons that remain unclear) to order several pounds of antimony from Salamander and Sons, located in Thailand. He paid for the order, plus the cost of re-shipping to him, and I kept half of the antimony. Antimony was very expensive at the time and often had to be purchased in quantities of a ton or more. Finding a small supplier was not easy.

This prompted me to write an article entitled "Is the Gay Science Dead?" in which I wrote:

If you want to succeed in confecting the Philosopher's Stone, go to school, get good grades, graduate with an MBA, invest wisely, and retire before you are forty years old. Not unlike the advice your parents gave you, is it?

Well, in addition to the time commitment—an average of twenty years full-time—there are also the costs associated with alchemy that relegate its most common practices to being called the "Path of the Rich."

A recent conversation with several alchemists focused around the point of current problems facing those on the path. Many pointed out that even if one has the time to do the work—ten to twenty years of nearly full-time dedication—they need to be independently wealthy on a scale much larger than before, particularly if they have a family to provide for. A quick look at current costs of supplies showed that it would take between $10,000 and $20,000 US dollars along with five years of work just to make the first attempt at the Stone. This also assumes that one has a fully equipped lab and does not come under the watchful eye of Big Brother, once massive purchases of chemicals becomes noticed. Full-time dedication to the process would require $1to $2 million if a family is to be supported during this time period.

Lisiewski repeated a story also told by Nintzel and Glass. In the 1970s, Regardie is said to have received an audiotape and color photographic slides in the mail which outlined a successful completion of the Philosopher's Stone by two people in Texas. Lisiewski stated that he had listened to the recording and looked at the slides. At that time, the pair is said to have spent upwards of $100,000 to confect the "Stone." After sending the information to Regardie, they disappeared. I am unaware of the location of either the tape or slides, if they ever actually existed.

Time Travel & the Great[6]

White Brotherhood
— Following One's True Will —

When we first spoke, I asked Lisiewski what he did professionally. He said that he was a physicist doing contract work for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and that he was one of a handful of contractors who could perform the work that he did. As time went by he would speak increasingly about this work, adding that he had a team of subcontractors working with him. At times he would go off on tangents about the need to "find good men" and the importance of "doing a job right the first time and not counting the cost." Several of those he said worked for him were former NASA employees who were laid off during budget reductions. This is important because Lisiewski stated that he was the recipient of over $18 million in NASA contracts over an extended period of time. He indicated that his work was essentially number analysis and it afforded him considerable spare time and money to undertake other work—work NASA was also interested in—concerning quantum gravity for space travel, as well as time travel. Suffice it to say he was very proud of his electronics laboratory. He had two three-foot tall

45 Tesla Coils which I saw in addition to other tools with which I was unfamiliar.

"I need to accomplish my mission, what I was sent here to do," Lisiewski would often say to me. When I asked him what that mission was, he said, "To destroy the New Age Movement and all the pain it has caused people."

When I first heard this I followed up with, "How can you do that, as it is already here? And what gives you the right?"
Lisiewski paused before responding. "With time travel it is possible. I

will go back in time and end it before it even begins."
"End what?"
"It all started when I was twelve years old. I met D— on the playground and we became friends. If that did not happen I never would have taken the path I did. The evocation of New Year's Eve [1966] would never have happened, and my life would have taken a very different direction. So, I will go back in time, walk up to D—, and punch him in the jaw. That will keep us from becoming friends—and an entirely new course will be taken. Then, I can destroy this movement." It was apparent that he had clearly and precisely thought it out.
"So, if you go back in time and mess with the timeline, what about the rest of us?"
"I don't think there should be a problem. This will probably be taking place in an alternate timeline or dimension," was his response.
"Well, 'probably' is a big 'if.' Maybe even affecting whether people will live or die. What if I do not want you messing with a timeline and affecting my life? What gives you the right to potentially alter the course of humanity?" I asked, my voice beginning to show some concern for his sanity. This was the stuff science fiction, fantasy, and conspiracy theories were made of.
"The inspiration, or the ability to conceive of the idea, is the thought of God in me, and therefore it is my right to do it," was his rationalization—an irony indeed, considering the New Age provenance of the idea behind it, which originally was popularized by the New Thought movement.

— Devil in the Details —

We continued with this line of discussion off and on for several years. He would often update me on his successes in the laboratory with *experimental proofs* of time travel— not simply theoretical ones. Given that I was in no position to witness them there was little more that I could do than listen. I even remember asking Jean Dubuis, an engineer and alchemist, about it. Dubuis stated that it is impossible in

Malkuth, the material world, but it is possible in the dimension of Yesod, or the psychic dimension.

"The problem is that you cannot go any farther back than your own life. So for me, I just want to go back to when I was twelve years old, but if I wanted to go back farther I would then cease to exist." Given that Lisiewski was not a believer in reincarnation,[1] as it is generally understood in the West, this made sense.

"Then you need something from that period as a reminder, to trigger your mind as to why you are there. To wake you up, so to speak, as memories may get foggy or disappear altogether as you regress. To do this you need something from the period. For me it is a notebook. I write myself a note in it, with a pencil from the period, and I have something to guide me when I arrive."

"What about clothes and money? How do you arrive?" I said.
Without missing a beat, Lisiewski replied, "I would just appear as my twelve-year-old self. There would not be two of me, just me, so that would not be a problem."
"And what would happen to the 'you' that was here?" I had seen one-too-many shows dealing with time travel—I had to ask.
"I would simply disappear. Slowly fade away as the timeline altered. Or it would be as if I had disappeared, like a missing person, just gone," he responded. "Either way, it does not matter, for I will continue to exist, either in a parallel timeline or in this one rebooted."
I understood the general idea of what he was thinking about, and that he had spent considerable time and energy contemplating this idea. He was not alone; as his wife said to me, "If anyone can demonstrate a unified theory of everything, it is Joe."
Over the course of our relationship he would mention the "progress in the lab" that he was making in this direction.

[1]Despite remarks made previously regarding his possible "former life" as A. E. Waite.

“Mark! How are you, old boy?” Lisiewski’s voice came through booming with enthusiasm. This was his typical rhetorical introduction; he quickly began to tell me the reason for his call. “We are making great success in the lab, measurable success. I showed the numbers to Tony, my old mentor at the University of Wales, and he was very surprised. The numbers are small, but significant.”

“Tony” was a name frequently brought up by Lisiewski in conversation. Lisiewski said that Tony was his advisor during his doctoral program, as well as his host while staying in Wales for part of his education. He would also mention a fellow in Berlin. Apparently, he had done a three- or six-month stint at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Switzerland. CERN operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world. When he first told me this, I recalled comments that Dubuis had made about CERN back in the 1990s; it is often the center of numerous conspiracy theories. According to Lisiewski, all of this constituted part of his educational requirements.

“At first I didn’t believe it myself, but I managed to make a pencil disappear. It was only for a second, but this can be increased.” He eventually told me that he was able to make a pencil disappear for a minute and a half.

“Where did it go?”
“I don’t know. But it went somewhere and I’ll find out.” “Just don’t send one of your stray cats through!” I said

half-jokingly. Lisiewski had several stray cats that he was fond of and fed.

“Of course,” he said. “They keep the mice down. And you don’t really take care of them, they take care of themselves.”
Eventually the day came when he announced that he was preparing for “human trials.” It was never clear to me what this meant in terms of actual technical requirements or equipment, but it was clear he was suggesting that he could— even if for brief measures—move

back and forth through time.
"Mark, we have had great success in the lab!" The "royal We" was one of Lisiewski's peculiar uses of language, and it was never clear to me whom he was actually talking about. At the time I knew it included me, although I still was not certain why it was used. As a convention of language it formed an interesting hook, in that it included other people in his projects, his ideas; in doing so, he hoped to indirectly include their energy as well. I had nothing to do with his interest in time travel, and simply listened as one does to a good story—I formulated no opinion either way.
"I have been having these episodes. At first they were short, and it was hard to tell if it was really happening or not, but now, now I am certain. At first I thought I just blacked out or fell asleep. Or that maybe the clock was wrong. But the numbers don't lie. I was gone for fifteen minutes!" He was highly excited about this revelation. "I don't remember going anywhere or experiencing anything; it was all like a blink of the eye." Eventually he would tell me that these periods of "absence" would last upwards of several hours, and that they were proof he had *physical ly entered* an alternate dimension—that time travel, as he theorized, was possible.

— Talking Heads —

Lisiewski frequently spoke of "being sent here" and of "the mission I was sent to do." It appears that this "mission" was one which he realized after performing the Abramelin Operation, of which he told me he had experienced "Knowledge and Conversation" in March 2001. The "Abramelin" is well known to most students of Western occultism, so I will not detail it here. Suffice it to say that it is an operation taking between six and eighteen months, often in a secluded setting, wherein after a series of dedications and prayers on a regular basis the operator will have what is called "Knowledge and Conversation with the Holy Guardian Angel." This term (which has become ubiquitous in modern magical literature) comes from the ritual outlined in *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage* by Abraham of Worms.[2]

The manuscript was made famous by S. L. MacGregor Mathers, the founder and head of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. To put this in context, Mathers was one of Aleister Crowley's magical teachers, and a man he would eventually have a terrible falling-out with; he claimed to have performed the ritual to its completion after being interrupted to attend to an emergency affecting the Order. Crowley was Israel Regardie's teacher, and Regardie had a similarly terrible falling-out with Crowley—one Regardie later attributed to a certain degree of immaturity on his own part.

Israel Regardie, of course, was Lisiewski's friend and teacher, with whom he did not have any long-standing quarrel. However, Lisiewski did believe that Regardie was deluding

[2] See S. L. MacGregor Mathers (trans.), *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage* (London: John M. Watkins, 1900). A more recent translation can be found in George Dehn & Steven Guth (trans.), *The Book of Abramelin: A New Translation* (Lake Worth, FL: Ibis Press, 2015).

Mathers, Crowley, Regardie

himself in several matters, probably out of traces of devotion or loyalty to Crowley. Lisiewski had a very public disagreement with Phyllis Seckler (an O.T.O. lodge master and once-removed student of Crowley) during his period in the A ∴ A ∴, and told me that he took

the blame upon himself, in part, for acting in too immature a fashion at the time. He did, however, repeat this pattern, by his own admission, taking on a student too early, being unprepared to teach him, and experiencing yet another resulting estrangement.

We have seen that Lisiewski had a splintering with others in the magical community of which he was a part—a community that was very small at the time—and the blame for these separations cannot be laid solely at his feet. The clear and repeated pattern of individuals who either do not know how to "play well with others" or who, after a period of occult operations, become incapable of healthy human interaction needs to be recognized. This pattern of collective self-sabotage is perceptible within the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn from the very beginning, and it is one that Lisiewski was aware of and discussed often.

Lisiewski was always protective of our friendship. He constantly asked me why I remained his friend when so many of his other relationships had ended poorly. To this I would always reply, "I simply accept you as you are." While this was comprehensible to him, it was also a somewhat foreign idea. Even when we had regained contact after his prolonged absence of three years, he called me in a panic on February 11, 2015, to see if everything was all right between us. It had been three weeks since we had spoken, and I was busy with many family and professional obligations. At this point he said to me, "You are a better man than me. I do not have enough love to be a parent. I came from a family where I was not wanted and I knew it. I remember specific things from when I was three years old. That is just the way it is."

He then quickly switched the subject to an analysis of the grimoires that he had performed using mathematical proofs. "The *Goetia* passes—it works. So does the *Heptameron*, and [Franz] Bardon. They are logically consistent. The *Clavicula Salomonis* does not pass, it does not work, and this can be seen in the opening instructions stating that if the first conjuration does not work to use the second

and even the third. If it worked easily or with regularity, three conjurations would not be needed." Six weeks later he called again, and we spoke for an hour and a half. He claimed that he was abandoning all occult studies and dedicating himself exclusively to his NASA research. He was done with magic.

He said that having cancer had changed him for the better. He was not "the old Joe," but more accepting of people. He also said he believed that the cancer was a result of not focusing his time and energy on his "work" after experiencing

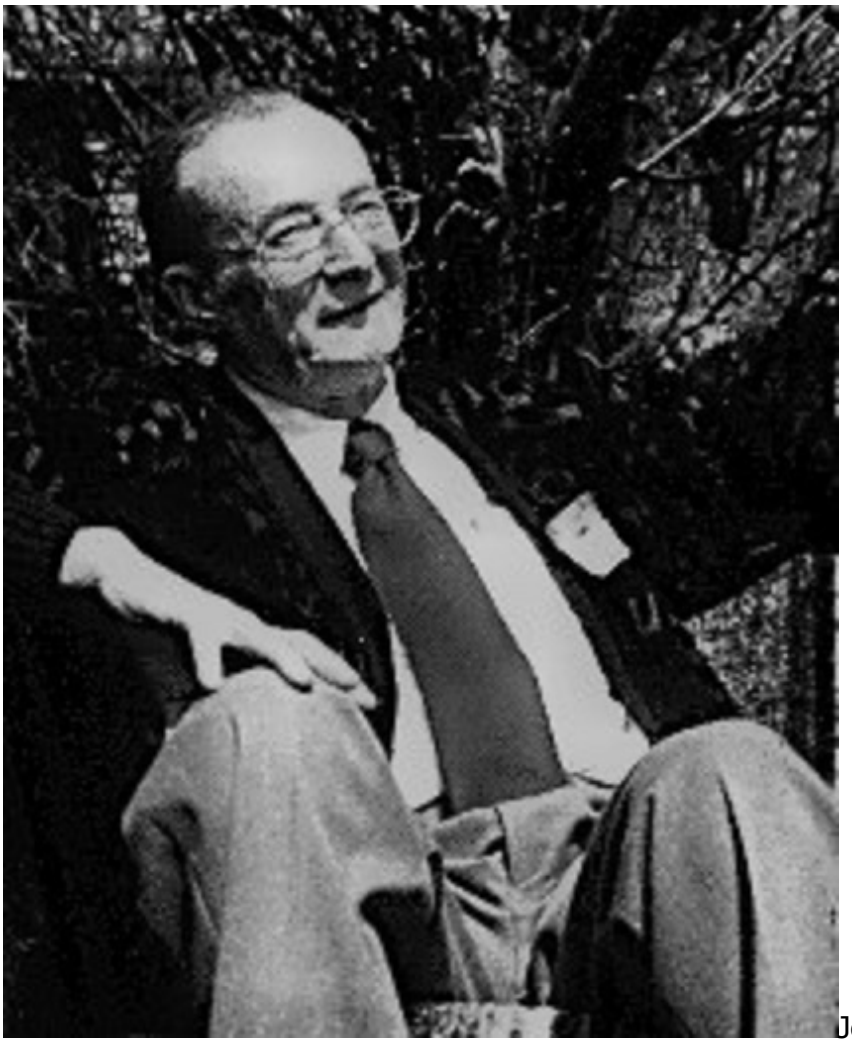
"Knowledge and Conversation" in March of 2001. What was most interesting about this involved a statement he made that I have heard repeatedly from practitioners of many systems: "I had the experience, not *during* the ritual, but while *preparing* for it. I was relaxing, sitting in my chair. I felt the presence of something nagging me. This was followed by three days of ecstasy."
— The Great White Lodge —

In possible relation to the mission Lisiewski believed he was tasked with, we must ask: from what higher authority did it come? The answer is simple. According to Joe it was the invisible adepts of the Great White Brotherhood. While he rarely used this term with me, nor spoke of it much, I was told by one of his students several months after his death that he had emphatically assured them that the destruction of the

"New Age Movement" (and its attendant magical movements) was a directive from the Masters of the Great White Lodge. During all of the time I knew him I do not remember Lisiewski ever putting much stock in the general ideas bantered about regarding this group of unknown and "ascended" adepts who are thought by many to guide the affairs of the world. Perhaps he was using this term as a convenience? Regardless, the idea of being a secret agent sent on a mission from "adept central control" fit perfectly within the Mathers-Crowley-Regardie mythos.

Even Frater Albertus and the line of instruction he had received fit into this paradigm. Jean Dubuis once made a passing reference to "the brotherhood" at a seminar he led. He spoke of having met one of their members near the French-German border. He described the experience as follows: "When he revealed himself in his power to me, I felt like an ant in the universe." There was nothing new here. The proof would be in the results, as Albertus would say.

The Great White Lodge derives its name from the idea that there is a brotherhood ("Great White Brotherhood") which is composed of perfected (or *nearly* so, in some instances) beings who guide the world on its "evolutionary journey" to enlightenment. The word "White" refers to their purity; opposed to them is the "Black Brotherhood," sometimes called the "Lords of the Left-Hand Path" or some similar odious-sounding name suggestive of their nefarious activities. These two latter terms are used interchangeably,


Jean Dubuis

having their origin in the late-nineteenth century writings of Madame Blavatsky. The notion of the Great White Brotherhood was widely used in modern occultism until the end of the twentieth century, when its use seemed to die off along with the groups it had originated from—Theosophy and later Rosicrucianism.

This notion of highly developed spiritual beings is nothing new, and can be found in the doctrines around the "Unknown Superiors" that contacted Mathers as well as in other early occult movements, and in the teachings about Bodhisattvas in Buddhism. One need only look to the various Christian sects and their saints, Judaism with its "Thirty-Six Righteous Ones," and others to understand the widespread acceptance of this idea.

Somehow, within Theosophy and later movements, this idea took on a level of high insanity that annoyed even Blavatsky! For her, the "invisible masters" were living human beings who worked quietly and anonymously. It was the same, to some degree, for Mathers, and in no way diminished their psychic and occult abilities; it only assumed they too had a place they called home that could be found on a map. This constituted the merging of several ideas: the House of the Holy Spirit (of the Rosicrucians), Buddhist Bodhisattvas, and various saints, all with a focus upon non-corporeal beings rather than incarnate ones. What makes this notion all the stranger is that, for reasons never made clear, several groups stated that while these "fully enlightened and perfect beings" were essentially gods, for some reason they were unable to directly affect the material world and needed to work through intermediaries. It is as if they were little more than floating heads in space looking for someone to carry their groceries for them!

— Floating Heads and the Cube —

Part of what Lisiewski may have been referring to by the "Great White Brotherhood" is perhaps explainable in the context of a psychic phenomenon with which I am familiar; at times, it is connected to meditation practices using a cube as the symbolic structure of the universe. There is an experience of spaciousness, often in the form of what we think of as "outer space" and, with it, the occasional vision of a human face looking back. The eyes are unblinking, and there is an intensity to the experience that may be enough to cause a break in contact very quickly. At other times there is the sense of something forbidden that should be avoided, but I have found this to be rare. What these "heads in space" are is difficult to say. When Lisiewski saw them they had a slight Greco-Roman appearance. He thought they might be the Greek gods or something of that nature. Possibly they are angels such as those we call "Watchers," or perhaps they are egregores. Maybe in the end Joe believed they were the

adepts of the Great White Brotherhood. I do not know, but the experience of this is genuine and can be unnerving.

Back to the Future, Part Two[7]

Lisiewski was fond of resurrecting and entering into sudden and deep studies of topics he had long put aside. As his confidant I became the principal "sounding board" for these ideas. Some of them were, of course, about writing and the business of publishing. Others were esoteric in nature, in an attempt to see if perhaps he had missed something, or had in his Aries rashness too quickly dismissed a possible avenue of practical work. His emphasis again was on the practical— tangible results in the domain of physical reality. As a result of this self-appointed requirement, he spent at least some time in the Temple of Set, even to the point of undertaking the practice of "therapeutic blasphemy," the renunciation of his Roman Catholic and Christian faith. As is well known to his readers, he ultimately found this not terribly useful, but it did help loosen some of the doctrinal hold the Roman Catholic Church had inculcated into him in his youth.

He was an off-and-on member of AMORC, rejoining it for the last time in 2010 and leaving quickly after about eighteen months. He had mentioned to me that in the 1990s he was contacted by someone from AMORC to assist in writing some of the lessons. While I have never been able to verify this, I do know that there was briefly some consideration of turning the

57 entire Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Degrees into something more traditional. What that meant was never explained to me and may have just been a passing idea between regime changes.

As a result of the intensity of his personality and his need for someone to assist him in directing some of his studies, as well as to perform various practices separately and discuss them with him, Lisiewski would routinely send me books on what "we" were working on. He also sent videos, with the most appropriate being copies of the movie *Faust*, both the 1926 Fritz Lang silent movie extended

version and the Richard Burton/Elizabeth Taylor version, *Doctor Faustus* (1967). He sent DVDs of his favorite childhood shows for my sons after I told him they liked the 1950s *Lone Ranger* television series and the *Batman* movie series from the 1940s.

He was quite generous with me when he wanted me to move forward on projects that would be profitable. "You have two sons, Mark, and they only get more expensive day by day," he would say. When I was thinking of making audio recordings and accompanying lesson materials available for purchase, Lisiewski had a commercial comb binder sent to me so I could bind lessons and astrological charts rather than pay printers' costs for them. When my computer was failing, he sent a refurbished desktop tower to me to use as a backup. In his own way he was very giving, both in time with readers and students who would email him and with others unconnected to esotericism. As he said to me, "I try to give everyone at least a few minutes to try and help them with their work. But they have to *do* the work and not send me two, three, and four emails afterward. For that they have to sign on as a student and pay tuition."

I heard more than my share about some of the email sent to him over the years, and the utter foolishness of it prompted him to create an alter-ego administrative assistant who would "answer" all emails with a polite letter sending them on their way. Regardie, Lisiewski told me, would hold a letter up to his forehead and, depending on the impression he got, open it or throw it away!

In addition to considerations for alchemical work, his publishing projects, and failed efforts at helping him to better use various media to promote his books, seven of the most detailed projects we worked on together involved New Thought, Enochian Magic, Franz Bardon, Radionics and Mind Machines, the works of William Gray, the Watcher, and *Howlings from the Pit*.

— New Thought —

New Thought was by far the most useful, practical, informative, and productive area of research and practice that Lisiewski and I worked on together. By getting to the foundation of human consciousness and fundamental methods of altering and directing it, it was possible to overcome or at least better understand the nature of the "subjective synthesis" in each person. During this period Lisiewski purchased a great many titles, as did I, with a preference (not surprisingly) for older editions rather than newer reprints. The works of Ernest Holmes, Frederick Bailes, and Judge Thomas Troward were among his particular favorites. It is here that he systematized his notions of "Higher Mysticism" and the relationship of magic to mysticism. As a result he would often say that

"magic ends in mysticism."
— Enochian Magic —

At one point I sent Lisiewski my paper on Enochian, and a copy of the CD from a workshop taught by Christeos Pir on the subject. The seminar, held in 2003, was sponsored by the Institute for Hermetic Studies. In 2008, Lon Milo DuQuette published *Enochian Vision Magick: An Introduction and Practical Guide to the Magick of Dr. John Dee and Edward Kel ley*, in which he states that "in 2003 my O.T.O. Brother and Enochian magick adept Christeos Pir sent me a computer disk of material from a marvelous Enochian seminar he presented in Pittston, Pennsylvania...I assure you, I could not have written this book without these materials and the profound insights of this great modern magician."[1]

Lisiewski and I discussed the Eighteen-Day Retreat along with Dubuis's concerns about the system. Lisiewski was uncertain about it, considering the effects the pursuit of Enochian had on John Dee and Edward Kelley. However, he decided to pursue it and, as such, he wanted the purest system he could find and did not want to work with anything related to or derived from the Golden Dawn. The crystal ball was an issue, as he wanted one with perfect or near-perfect clarity while, at the same time, one that was big enough to

look into. He sent me a set of CDs of the Enochian manuscripts from the British Museum, saying they were from Bill Heidrick.[2] During this time he looked at quite a bit of the "traditional" Enochian ritual materials being made available, but ultimately did not buy any and, eventually, abandoned the idea of working with Enochian altogether.

— Franz Bardon —

After we began communicating again, Lisiewski sent me a set of books by Rawn Clark on the works of Franz Bardon. These, along with the books authored by Bardon, were the basis of considerable time and conversation, as Bardon was one of the few magicians he liked. To my knowledge, he did not work with Bardon again, as he had previously, and instead focused mostly on Clark's commentary. Lisiewski at this time was physically far weaker than he let on.

[1] Lon Milo DuQuette, *Enochian Vision Magick: An Introduction and Practical Guide to the Magick of Dr. John Dee and Edward Kelley* (San Francisco: Red Wheel/Weiser, 2008) 17.

[2] An O.T.O. member and one of Lisiewski's A ∴ A ∴ associates.

— Radionics and Mind Machines —

One of the areas Lisiewski and I experimented with was the use of so-called "mind machines." These are essentially "radionics devices" that can be easily built and look like an electrical schematic when completed. Radionics was developed by Albert Abrams (1864-1924) in the early twentieth century; it made him a millionaire. While the explanation behind radionics contradicts modern science, it is basically a modernization of sympathetic and talismanic magic. We experimented with several devices from *Mind Machines You Can Build*[3] but achieved no measurable results.

— William Gray —

William Gray was someone very much like Lisiewski in tone and temperament. Both of them were born under the astrological sign of Aries with a natural flare for magic, as well as for technology. Gray

was someone Lisiewski could both understand and identify with. It is not surprising that while Gray was the superior writer, both men developed idiosyncratic and, at times, difficult styles of writing that could be challenging for the reader. Gray's emphasis on direct contact, personal perception, and willingness to go where "angels fear to tread" was an area where we were both able to compare and contrast personal experiences.

— Howlings from the Pit —

Lisiewski was approached by Nick Tharcher to write a book based upon his highly successful and profitable newsletter, *Howlings from the Pit: A Journal of Old System Magic, Theurgy, and Goetia*. The first volume appeared in May 2007 and was electronically published quarterly for one year, with

[3]G. Harry Stine, *Mind Machines You Can Build* (Top of the Mountain Publishing, 1994).

a total of four issues. Lisiewski asked me to collate the book for him, as he was either too busy or had no interest in writing it. The problem consisted of incomplete articles, with themes appearing across several issues. Collating all of the material and keeping it intelligible was difficult at times. Extensive commentary was needed to transition between themes and ideas, to provide a context that a reader of the book might not have if they were unfamiliar with Lisiewski's other works. It needed to be made into a "standalone title." Lisiewski paid me to perform this work for him, and much to my surprise, signed over the rights to me as well. David Rankine agreed to write an afterword for the book when I contacted him on Lisiewski's behalf.

In *Howlings from the Pit*, three areas of work comprised the bulk of correspondence Lisiewski would receive: the Rite of Aspersion, the Blasting Rod, and the Watcher.

It was also during this time frame that he asked me to make some Abramelin Oil for him. Unlike many commercially available versions of

Abramelin Oil, mine was not green in color, but after a period of time turned ruby red—the color of alchemical perfection or completion. We also went over in greater detail my initial introduction to the *Heptameron* by way of a Martinist Order to which I once belonged. Here, the Circle of Art was little more than four feet in diameter! There was no room to move, and we both agreed that this may very well have been purposeful: the smaller circle seemed to constrict or concentrate one's aura or energy field, possibly as a protective measure.

The basic daily Rite of Aspersion was a favorite among Lisiewski's students, and for good reason: it was easy to perform and appeared to work. One started with basic water and salt and, later, a pure essential oil was used. This oil, Lisiewski claimed, would turn blue if the attunement was complete.

The Watcher was by far the most interesting of Lisiewski's creations. I say that because it was literally a creation of his, combining a ritual from Waite's *Book of Black Magic and of Pacts*[4] and one of the Neophyte Degree Initiations from the Rosicrucian Order (AMORC). Here, Lisiewski made several complex and difficult additions, including the particular shape of the candleholders and specific cone incense. I remember him saying that the cone was needed to get the proper geometric spiral in the smoke, and that in making the student work hard to get harder-to-obtain materials they would invest the proper amount of emotional energy into the practice, "just like in Old System Magic."

If successful, the operator would have the experience of a Being appearing behind them and placing its hand on their shoulder. At this critical point one could end up with a spiritual ally that would perform one's bidding—or the operation would end in failure. Overcoming one's fear and *not turning around* when the entity made itself known were the key.

Lisiewski told me that after he had first done this ritual he went for a drive in his hometown and almost ended up in an altercation with someone. While he managed not to come to blows with the person involved, apparently "that night, right afterwards, this same guy went home and killed his family. I think that this was a direct result of the Watcher." I explained to him a phenomena occurring in Tibetan Buddhism with the Dharmapala, or Guardian practices. His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche told a similar story and cautioned about practices involving Protector Deities. They can be very demanding, and the practices particularly dangerous if not carried out to the letter.

Lisiewski published the material regardless, against my advice. It must be noted that the original practices from which this work derived did not have negative consequences—

[4] Originally published as A. E. Waite, *The Book of Ceremonial Magic: Including the Rites and Mysteries of Go¨etic Theurgy, Sorcery, and Infernal Necromancy* (London: Rider, 1911). Reprinted numerous times in many editions.

a possible "Terror of the Threshold" moment and psychic visions, but not the spontaneous carrying out of one's passing wishes. Nevertheless, Lisiewski felt that he was responsible for the deaths of these people, that it was a result of his anger that the "Watcher" acted on those emotions as a command.

It is possible that this was an ominous portent. In the end, it was Lisiewski's anger that would be the biggest challenge for him to overcome.

The Road to Joe’s

The Final Chapter[8]

The phone call came as scheduled. As usual, I used a cordless handset that rested on a small stand in my kitchen, nestled in the chimney elbow between the cellar door and the stove.

I picked up the receiver and heard Lisiewski's voice for the first time in (as he reminded me) "three years and seven months." Over the next few hours he told me that as of the last time we had spoken he was arranging a move to the United Kingdom and had even obtained dual-citizenship for his wife and himself. They bought a country estate and were preparing to move when he noticed blood in his urine. At the hospital he was informed that he had Stage Four prostate cancer and was told he had six months left to live. In his typical fashion he told the doctors otherwise. The following months were difficult and painful, and the pain reliever—Vicodin—was highly addictive, including withdrawals worse than anything he had known ("a 15 on a scale of 10"). Fighting back until the end, Joe undertook total magical silence to battle the disease.

My notes from the period follow.
1 January 2015 Joe stated he was in contact with S— and arranged for him to

65 perform a ritual from the *Key of Solomon*, only to find that the Operator who performed it did not perform the Charge properly and that Lisiewski told him to do the ritual again, wherein R— may have been the one contacted. It is unclear who is doing the rituals.

Lisiewski said he performed a ritual himself and that a huge flame appeared on the outside of the circle, and that the heat was so intense he thought he would pass out. He also stated that he performed a ritual from the *Key of Solomon* himself, using a twelve-inch crystal ball—'that was not inexpensive and difficult to obtain'—

only to find that 'instead of Michael in the crystal I saw a huge gray-robed being with black wings' and heard something about the path between Binah and Hockmah. Soon afterward his health turned and as his money was tied up in the UK, they were forced to sell the estate, unable to repatriate his money except at a 48% tax rate. He blames the failed ritual for this effect. He stated that my cards were helpful in getting him through this crisis and that he burned 1,600 of his magical and occult books in a bonfire using kerosene, starting at 9 am and finishing at 8 pm.

As a result of his health issues, he stated that he is a new person. He sounded a little tired, but still cantankerous and I heard the sound of a lighter, so I assume he is still smoking.

11:00 pm — I telephoned Lisiewski and continued our conversation. He stated that he changed his email to avoid correspondence with S— and R—, but that does not match my vivid memory of our last conversation in May 2011, as I stood in my backyard facing my porch. More details regarding the failed operation: Lisiewski was concerned about bringing the large crystal sphere into the Circle of Art as was directed, but did so anyway. At one point in the ritual he saw:

It was a gray and black hooded figure, with no face. I could see the individual feathers on the [black] wings. I rubbed my eyes and it was still there. This was the Path between Binah and Hockmah. R— is dangerous in what he is writing. The Western

Tradition does not work. It does not work. I know alchemy works, but magic. It is too unbalanced. What proof do we have of who wrote it and why? I am done, and will never perform another evocation to visible appearance again. I have performed many evocations, and five of them major, but never again.

He continued:

During my sickness I had to face many things and come to terms with my own weaknesses. My limitations, they are mostly emotional. Too much emotion limited my productivity. It was not pleasant. I had to come to terms with Francis [Israel Regardie], but not Albertus. Albertus was not self-delusional. When I was twenty I went to the mountains as I annually did, and during that time—and not even Darlene knows this—I renounced Christianity and Catholicism. Forty-three years later in the depths of my desperation I went back. I had the priest here twice a month, and paid him handsomely in cash. Special masses once a month

—the priest's eyes became big like silver dollars. I spent a small fortune on statues and books. Then, I smashed them all, and consigned it all to the fire. The next day I felt immediately all right. Christ is a failure. He was an adept and got caught up in the politics of the day and nailed to a cross. They couldn't reproduce his results so they created a church of suffering. [Scripture quoting.] Christ failed, he failed.

I burned 1,600 books, except for a few, and am convinced that the Slingshot Effect is unavoidable. I do not know why it occurs, but it does, and it is always there. But, there are other ways, and Darlene found them in 2013, in the third week of November. The exact week she found it and gave it to me, but for now all I can say is like Barret, "Magic seeks to flee from the public eye. To Know, To Dare, To Will, and to remain Silent." When everything is done I will tell you everything. Maybe this summer we can get together and you can stay over for the night.

It may sound strange, but I am glad this happened. I realize that each person is doing the best he can at his level of evolution. Even the serial rapist. Each is doing the best they can with what they have. There are no guarantees. If you want a savior find it within yourself. [Biblical quotes.]

Magic is done out of greed and necessity. That is all. People want shortcuts where there are none. I charge my clients what I know they can afford—some are $1,600 a month or more, and there is no shortage. I don't do it for the money, I buy lab

equipment with it. Out of thirteen original students, five are left, and they have been with me for eight years. When teaching you need authority, and distance, and that comes from letting them know they will be dropped. I taught all through my sickness through will power. None of them [G—, S—, A—, etc, etc.] knew anything.

We then had some discussion of the costs involved in arranging for the failed move to the UK, stating that it was $220,000 or about $50,000 per person, as you pay for your own investigations, and that his legal bills in the US (two lawyers in DC and one in Philadelphia) will run over $50,000 and his tax bill between $10,000 and $100,000. He said that he "loaned" over $20,000 in twenty months when they lived in Kulpmont.

I promised not to tell anyone about his illness so as not to contaminate his healing efforts.
He then stated: "You are my friend and I trust you implicitly. Let us work together again. But as for publishing, there will be no more books on the occult. Fiction maybe."

16 January 2015 I sent Joe two red protection cords and a black crow feather.

18 January 2015 (3:30 pm – 5:30 pm)

Joe states that the package arrived on Saturday (leaving a message on my phone to this effect) and during our call I told him to open the box. I walked him through the meaning of the objects, and the story of how I came to possess the crow feathers. A blessing from earlier in the year came when after stating my need for it, I took Andy for an unscheduled walk and came across it, still fresh. He stated that there was a significant charge on the talismans. I explained the protection cords as well.

Joe reaffirmed his conviction regarding the effectiveness of Bardon based on its mental training, Elemental emphasis, and use of the zodiacal energies. He has sent me a copy of *Magical Evocation* to replace my old copy and it should arrive on Tuesday. He disclosed his conviction that Israel Regardie was not an effective magician but that he ignored it out of loyalty. Regardie's psychological emphasis was his weakness, as well as his notion that "a little bit of magic is better than no magic," in contradistinction to Lisiewski's view of it being an "all or nothing" activity. I told him that I will send him and Darlene protection cords at the end of the Sign of Aries after they are made for the upcoming year. He is still in possession of the weapons used for his last evocation and the twelve-inch crystal ball. Darlene wants him to "burn" everything. He stated that he is down to 165 pounds, an increase over his lowest weight, but wants to get back to the 200 range.

(3:30 pm – 4:45 pm)**23 January 2015**

Joe stated again that he has no interest in proving "life after death" or anything "paranormal." His usual disdain was cast upon those who undertake ghost hunting: "people looking to feel important when they have nothing in their lives and can't even pay the water bill"—going so far as to say that "if ghosts exist because of some problem they have who are we to help them or tell them what to do? They need to figure it out on their own, just like we do." His profanity-laced

monologue was typical of past experiences. He says he has changed and the "new Joe" is not a "prick like the old Joe"; however, extended calls like this leave that statement in the "to be seen" department. His critique of paranormal research by the amateur was accurate but commonplace. He was not very helpful in answering some questions, as his rambles and profanity dominated and distracted the direction of the call. He stated, "Hey, I am 65 and it is getting late in the day," an attitude I had not previously heard him voice aloud.

He also stated, again, that he has a big project he is working on, and when it is completed, I and others will benefit—whatever that means. I have heard this before from him and others: promises of funding for the Institute, of no concerns for my sons' college educations. He wants to invite several of his students to work with him—on what is not clear—once they graduate. He reaffirmed his conviction that Albertus was not "self-delusional" but believed Regardie was, out of his devotion to Crowley, and that Israel Regardie always had trouble with women, and may have had homosexual leanings. According to Joe, Regardie once said to him, "If I was gay then we [he and Crowley] would have had a grand old time."

Over the next few months we spoke regularly but little more came of it. Our conversations at this point were a way for Lisiewski to reflect and reminisce over the "old days." Then on September 26, 2015, one day after I performed a Novena to St. Cyprian on the Feast Day of St. Cyprian of Antioch, Lisiewski contacted me late in the afternoon, on Sunday, asking me to perform an exorcism for him. The weather was sunny and pleasant and I was outside near my back porch, just like the last time I heard from him before he fell out of touch. I told him I would help him.

"Anything you want, do not worry," he said. "Any books, take them. Anything. I need this gone and you are the only one who I can turn to, the only one I trust, to help me. I will show you the diaries of the operation, everything will be made known to you and nothing will be held back."

From the end of this call until my arrival on October 15, 2015, Lisiewski phoned me several times. However, my date for arrival was not finalized until Tuesday, the twelfth of October. On the thirteenth, I spoke to my associate Brian Osborn for about an hour about the upcoming trip, and purchased a small quantity of black obsidian on his suggestion, along with six pounds of Epsom salts for the burning. On Thursday, the fourteenth of October, Lisiewski called me several times around 9:45 pm in a panic. I was briefly able to speak to Darlene as well. Our aged Border Collie Bess unfortunately lost control of her bowels and needed to be contained in the kitchen, as that was the only area with a floor we could mop easily (she passed away six weeks later). Andrea was anxious about my leaving, and in the morning I cleaned up the floor four times and then ran to the veterinarian to get Bess's medicine. I called Darlene to tell her I was on my way, and left at 9:15 am.

I sent an email to R— simply stating that I understood he had assisted Lisiewski with an operation about four years previously. I asked him if there was anything he could tell me about it, but I never ended up receiving a reply. Traffic was a bit aggressive, but I still arrived at the Lisiewski residence around noon.

Upon arriving I noticed that the house appeared to be smaller than I anticipated, having been built into a slope which concealed its size. The property was otherwise as I had imagined, with a simple gravel drive. Two older model Hyundais were parked parallel near the right side of the front porch area. From there, one could walk straight into the basement or up a set of stairs onto the porch and into the first floor, and from there one could navigate upward to the second floor. There were many dishes for feeding stray cats under the porch area. The stairs were worn but sturdy. A large brown pull-down shade hung on the porch directly in front of the front door, which reduced the ingress of light and granted a degree of privacy.

To the left side of the door was a small pellet rifle, and a large canvas sack containing something that attracted my attention simply by its

location. This, I would soon find out, was the sphere used in the evocation. The house had a strange pattern, with the main door opening directly into a large kitchen. To the right was the living room. At the ends of the living room were doors to rooms on the left and right. The right one was a small, nice office with French doors. This was Joe's "physics office." It was filled with books on physics and new heavy-duty plastic folding tables for working on. Opposite it was Darlene's office, which had a side door opening directly to the front porch. Joe spent his time moving from a recliner situated in the middle of the wall with a gray twelve-foot table in front of it to a sofa on the back wall situated between these two offices.

To the right of the physics office was a small bedroom wherein Joe performed his evocation. It had a doorway opening to a bathroom, with a matching door that opened to the kitchen. A large TV sat between the physics office and the bedroom, and Joe would sit opposite it with a large gray folding table before him on which were several books, notebooks, and various other working materials.

To the right of the small bedroom was a door that led to a stairwell, with full-length banisters on both sides, leading to the second floor. It was slightly steep, and narrow. There were several rooms filled with books along with two small bookcases in the narrow hallway between the rooms. The guestroom I used was immediately to the right of the stairs. All of the shades were closed in the house.

The basement was large, and originally had water issues which Joe had fixed. His electronics lab was in a room positioned directly beneath his physics office. A small room near the front of the house and near the porch held his stock of incense.

Darlene was pleasant, hard to pin an age on, and dressed simply. Of average height, she wore a "country life"-style blouse. Her hair was black streaked with some gray, and she wore it pulled back. She bore dark, thick-rimmed glasses, befitting the image of a scientist. She was very quiet and attentive, slow to speak, but clearly quite intelligent and acutely aware of what was happening. Her Ph.D. was

in biology, having done her thesis on the origins of life, based on Lisiewski's early work at PRS. "Miller used electricity," she said, "but we added the magnetic field to the experiment, and I had very good results. Nearly half the cells returned to normal. I would change the experiments today, but the basic thesis is still very strong and needs further research. We could eliminate disease with it, and speed up healing."

The Lisiewskis' Home

Lisiewski was thin, moving slowly, slightly shaking at times, with hands cold to the touch. He was obviously embarrassed by his

physical appearance. His hair was still blond with some gray, and it was thinning heavily in some parts. He was wearing red-and-black plaid pajama bottoms, and at times would wear black leather driving gloves when he slept to keep his hands warm. Despite labored breathing (which he said was a side effect of the medicine he was taking), he was very talkative and smoked continuously the entire time I was there. The kitchen table was covered with medication (a marker board on the refrigerator acted as a schedule), mixed brands of cigarettes, and a mixed bag of amber-colored filters he used when smoking. He claimed they "remove ninety-nine percent of the tar and nicotine. I've been smoking forty-eight years and my lungs are perfect because I do not inhale. It simply sits at the back of my throat and I let it out. I never inhale..." Several battery-operated electronic ash trays were placed around the house and used to keep the smoke level down. They appeared to work, as while the smell was strong, the actual smoke was not heavily present despite non-stop smoking.

We talked for a bit, and I explained to them what we were going to do. I told Joe to relax, and asked Darlene to give me a tour of the house and grounds.

The property was built around 1983 and saw three families in twenty-five years before the Lisiewskis moved in. The last family ended in divorce. The property was a veal farm at one point, but the business had failed. Slaughtering was done off-site for the most part.

A small fruit grove was to the "right" of the house, near where a burn barrel was placed, in the northeast quarter of the grounds. Willow trees grew near the slope that led up to the barn, and a small creek ran in front of the property. The land was very rocky in parts, despite the back slope being cut down and about fifteen to twenty acres in size, neatly lined with trees. Snakes were common in the area during summer, including rattlers and even copperheads.

While the back slope and road in front were in auspicious placement, the creek, willow trees, and slaughterhouse were located in a way

considered extremely negative—"downwardmoving energy" in Chinese Feng Shui and Western variations which work with the energies and *spiritus loci*. The effect is considered heavy, consolidating forces and creating an inward push of energy that can create depression as well as provide a gateway to communicate with spirits in the invisible. The stand of fruit trees nearby could counterbalance that energy and neutralize its effects if not understood or used beneficially. In short, it would be a good place for evocation.

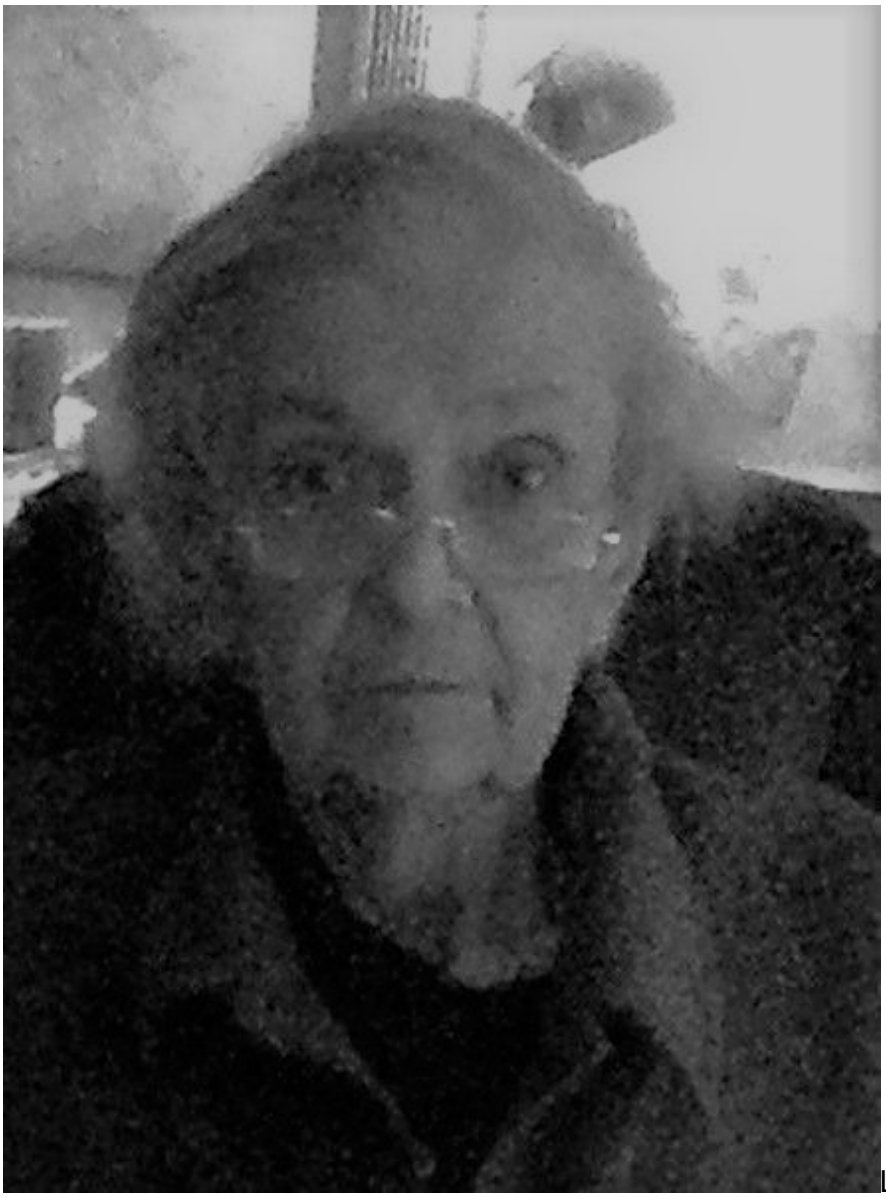
During my initial discussion with Darlene, we stood near the fruit trees—lined up neatly in two rows, near old fence posts with their electric ceramic resistors still on them. "I need to know what is going on here," I said. "I need to know everything in order to help the both of you. I really need to understand what was happening four years ago that led up to this."

She looked at the ground, her head moving from side to side, lips tightening. "Joe's version of the truth may not be my version of the truth and I do not want to say anything that may contradict what he has told anyone."

"I understand," I said, "but I do not care what exaggerations or even lies he may have told. I need to know what was happening so we can turn this around, if that's possible. I am not going to bring things to his attention. He doesn't need that. He needs to focus on getting better. But I need to know. There is a saying that goes 'we are only as sick as our secrets'—meaning you need to remember what you told people and this causes tension. Our secrets then go toxic and make us sick."

There was a pause before she responded.
"Joe found this place through magic," she said with a smile. "He was unhappy with the people in Kulpmont, what it had turned into, and wanted to move. So he worked at it, and we found this. We do not own it, we rent it. But Mike the owner lets Joe tell everyone we do. Mike is a wonderful guy and he used to live here."

“Was there ever a plan to move to Europe?”
“No. Never.”
“Is Joe suing his doctors for malpractice? Did a lawyer visit the house last week?”
“No. There is no lawsuit.”
“Is there money tied up in an IRS investigation?”
Her head shaking, she was obviously becoming nervous.
“Tell me about Bucknell. What happened to his job there?”
“There never was a job at Bucknell. He never worked


Last Known Photograph of Joseph Lisiewski

there."
"Does he have two Ph.D.'s?"
She answered quite nervously. "No," she said. "He has a

Master's in Chemical Engineering. That is it. We met when he was working at Paulson Wire and Rope, and he worked there for ten years. He had trouble working with others because of his compulsiveness, and had to leave. He has never had a job since, until the last few years [2007] when he has done well with his private students. That is the story; I am sorry."

"No, it's okay. This is important. I need to know in order to help." She placed her hand on her chest, exhaled, and inhaled, her head moving up and back, and a smile coming to her face. "I feel so much better," she said. "Carrying around those secrets, having to hide for him. It's like a burden has been lifted from me." She smiled again, and walked more upright. Healing began.
All of the windows were covered, even during the day. When I asked about it, Darlene replied, "Joe and I tend to sleep late. We often go to bed at 3 or 4 am and sleep until noon." I asked why the shades were not up at least part of the time. "Joe can get intense headaches from the light at the wrong angle," she responded.

— More Secrets Revealed —

In preparation for the ritual to follow, Lisiewski explained to me his operation, where he had gotten it from, and who was involved in it. He also placed before me a stack of leatherbound six-by-eight-inch lined notebooks. They had mostly black covers, with a few of them red. The interiors were primarily filled with his writing in black and red ink. There were additional notes in a three-ring binder, including emails he received from R—, who had performed no less than three, possibly four, tarot divinations for him regarding the operation to follow. Each one foretold the unequivocal success of what Lisiewski was about to undertake.

The notebooks also contained the written rage Lisiewski expressed as it became clear to him that the ritual was a failure. In one he writes: "I reject Michael! Why should I not? What has he ever done for me? I performed the ritual and now things are worse. Damn R— and this entire Art."

The purpose of the ritual was to obtain a sum of money well in excess of $100 million, to be used toward the completion of a host of projects he sought to undertake—specifically, for his research on time travel. The amount of money was staggering, as was its intended use...maybe the Great White Brotherhood had changed its mind.

— The Exorcism —

I provided Lisiewski with a long red priest's stole with equalarmed crosses covering it. The important part here was that one of the crosses cover the back of his neck, traditionally considered an entry point for vengeful spirits, with another cross covering his solar plexus. I wore a matching one. Normally purple would be worn for exorcisms, but I was unable to obtain one of the proper length, color, and design in time. I instructed him to relax as we said some prayers. Frankincense resin smoked on coals resting on a bed of sand inside of a fresh clay "French" soup bowl used as an incense burner. These bowls are commonly used in French rites as they can withstand the heat and can easily be carried by their side handle. They also comply with the requirements of the *Heptameron*, Lisiewski's favorite magical text.

The familiar set of operations proceeded at this point, beginning with sprinkling of Holy Water while reciting: "*Thou shalt purge me with hyssop O Lord, and I shal l be clean. Thou shalt wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.*" This was followed by a blessing with the Sign of the Cross, the holy breath, and blessing of the incense:

The God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless here the creatures of these kinds, that they may fill up the power and virtue of their odors; so that neither the enemy, nor any

false imagination, may be able to enter into them: through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Next, repetition of prayers from the *Heptameron* for the preparation of the suffumigations:

I exorcise thee, O creature of Fire, by Him by whom all things are made, that forthwith thou cast away every phantasm from thee, that it shall not be able to do any hurt to anything.

This was followed by the Sign of the Cross, and then: The recitation was followed again by the Sign of the Cross. A short Mass was held, and the Ninety-First Psalm was

Bless, O Lord, this creature of fire and sanctify it, that it may be blessed to set forth the praise of thy Holy Name, that no hurt may come to the Exorcists or Spectators: through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

repeated. The Mass was held under my authority as ordained clergy, with the Psalm being that of the exorcist. It is deemed the principal prayer that affirms the power of "The Most High" and, with it, the authority and power of the exorcist to dispel any oppressive forces. This was chosen because of Lisiewski's familiarity with it, as it is found in nearly all of the grimoires. Despite his rejection of Catholicism, the religion of his youth, and his brief return to it during his illness, this was still the primary framework for all of the evocations he had performed across his lifetime.

We then performed the traditional "Egg Cleansing"—a common folk practice wherein an egg is used as a magnet or sponge to absorb any negative energies that may be attached to or near the oppressed party. This was also done as he held one between his hands and imagined all negativity moving into the egg as he prayed and chanted. The eggs used by me were wrapped in red and black yarn, according to tradition. These were placed directly back into their original container and disposed of in a rocky section of the northeast corner of the property, the traditional corner for obstacles and the

approach of all things harmful. They were not broken, as that is thought to release the energies, but buried and left for wild animals.

"That was good," he said, his anxiety loosening a little. "Good," I said. "Now, all I want you to do is sit here. Relax, and chant IAO, like this." I demonstrated the technique as a reminder, as well as to show Darlene. "Just do that, and repeat every so often, 'My debt to you is paid.' Just keep repeating IAO and 'my debt to you is paid' while thinking of any of the spirits that you may have contacted during the ritual, in preparation for it, or that may have interceded on your behalf."

Lisiewski sat in his chair, too weak to assist directly, and simply said the prayers as given.

With that in place, I went outside and incensed the house three times to secure it and purify it. I then moved to a yellow fifty-five gallon drum that had been previously arranged in the north-northeast direction, facing the willows and near the line of fruit trees. The sacred name of "AGLA" or "*Atoh Gibor LeOlam Adonai* "[1] was written on it, using blessed chalk, in all four directions. AGLA was used in medieval ceremonial magic as a Divine Name of Exorcism. It is considered to be a word which holds power over demons.

All of the objects used in the ritual were dragged outside and placed nearby. Ample dry tinder could be found nearby from a recent trimming of the various trees. This was stacked inside the burn barrel. The objects to be burned were blessed with water and smoke. The Ninety-First Psalm was repeated to affirm the authority of the exorcist and assistant to those present.

Outside, prayers of offering were made to secure the support and understanding of all the various visible and invisible beings with whom Lisiewski may have had a relationship and, as such, may have incurred a "debt" to that had to be "repaid." These prayers were accompanied by a traditional offering of food and drink to bring beneficial support to our work. There was considerable visualization

of the so-called rainbow lights, or presence of divine beings. These visualizations help focus the mind and keep it concentrated on the task at hand, and are also thought to create a very real conduit for the positive and beneficial psychic energies to manifest through. The Divine Name IAO was constantly chanted as we prepared to destroy the implements of the Art.

By now it was about three in the afternoon. The factory nearby had let out its shift and, with the exception of two Amish girls across the street (who looked about five or six years old), we were alone. What could be torn up into smaller pieces was done so that the fire would burn hotter and more quickly. About ten minutes into the operation, and with only one-third of the papers burned, the weather began to turn.

[1]"Thou art powerful and eternal, O Lord."

The sky above us became blackish-gray; slowly, it started to rain. The weather became threatening as the winds picked up, and for the first time I had the feeling that this could get rough. It was then that I reminded myself that rain was a good sign. Rain is the manifestation of the energies of life and purification. As Jean Dubuis had stated several times, it is the transfer of energy in alchemy. When I accompanied my great-uncle Eddy to meetings twice a month for several years he often commented that, with few exceptions, there was visible precipitation on those nights. The prayers were kept up and more things were consigned to the flames. Incense was added along with Epsom salts. I kept stirring the barrel with a pole to ensure that everything was burned to an ash—a pure white or at least white-gray salt. Nothing recognizable or useable could remain.

Three white linen robes, clean underwear, dozens of wax candles, wax seals of virgin beeswax used for the candleholders in the operation, a short ceremonial sword, a gold colored cast-resin cross, matches, small containers of lighter fluid, charcoal for incense, ceramic bowls for holding ritual materials, the wooden altar itself, cardboard boxes which anything was stored in, and additional

luggage containing older ritual materials from previous workings, small vials of the seven incenses for the seven planets (each marked and sealed), pens, papers, and even over a half-dozen diaries containing the details of preparation and execution of the operation as well as records of the months following—all went into the barrel, all was consumed.

The fire was an amazing brilliant orange, and I was singed once or twice. I stirred the contents of the barrel, imagining the rainbow light, generating good will to all on behalf of Joe and Darlene, repeating IAO and "not that a single stroke of their names remain" so that everything associated with the ritual was destroyed or rendered useless. The final thing to enter the fire was a crystal ball, about the size of a small kickball or child's bowling ball. It was wrapped in cloth, with several marks on it where Joe had shot it at a distance. It did not shatter. I wore latex insulated gloves when handling anything not wrapped, but was particularly cautious to do so with the sphere. Darlene carried out a sledgehammer and, on the third strike, the sphere cleaved. I dropped the bag in the fire and repeated the visualization and prayers.

The burning took two or more hours to complete. In the end I was exhausted. I would experience atypical tendonitis in my right elbow and hand for over six months afterwards.

Everything has a price.
— Evening: The Secret of Magic is Revealed —

That evening Lisiewski sat in his chair and I sat in front of him on a rolling desk chair. Between us was his hardcover copy of *Hindu Magical Secrets* by L. W. de Laurence and the notes he and D— used during their evocations nearly five decades earlier. There was also a new copy of Barrett's *The Magus*. He was comparing the two; de Laurence is nearly a complete lift from Barrett, who in turn took it from Agrippa. Joe focused on a line in one paragraph dealing with the creation of the lamen from gold, where he read in one of the books that it is to be made of gold, and in another that it is to be made of

black ink. “You change just one thing and you make a new system, and that will work just as well,” he said with a twinkle and a sense of having discovered something fantastic. He then presented me with the copy of Barrett’s *The Magus*.

Lisiewski needed to rest, so I went outside for a few minutes. The air was black, and the sky filled with stars. It was cold, and I could hear a fantastic sound from the high east corner of the field—something like a deer—it was deep and aspirated. Brian later told me that this was a good sign.

Later, around midnight, Joe said to Darlene: “Mark is the kind of magician I wish I was, a scholar and a practitioner.

"All was consumed..."

I am just a gunslinger. Strap on the six guns and off you go. If we worked together, there is nothing we could not accomplish." It was a generous compliment, but one that may have overestimated both of our capacities at this point.

He also said that Nick Tharcher wanted to put out a second edition of *Howlings from the Pit*, as he had received emails complaining of my commentary, and that he wanted to remove certain sections, including the introduction. This may or may not have been true (but I am leaning on the side of the former!).

Darlene spoke lightly and humorously (and with a little embarrassment) of her youthful experiences with the Eckankar spiritual movement. She told me that, at the time, Joe was even jealous of the leader, mentioning that he was competing for her affections.

The second floor was cold, with no heat. I placed camphor in the corners of the room, left a small light on, and opened the shades despite the slight incoming glow from an amber light on a pole across the road and in the lumber company's truck yard. I slept until 5 am and then off and on until 7 am. When I rose, I packed my things and then checked on the rest of the house. I chalked the doors with AGLA. The burn barrel was still smoking. The morning was very nice.

Before I left I reviewed the St. Cyprian prayers and icons that I left behind, and the notes on how to perform the daily practice. I provided protection cords and reminded them to pay attention to their thoughts, words, and deeds. Joe stated that the last one I sent stopped working and fell off (I reminded him again to be mindful of his thoughts, as it is not a mechanical process). I also left him with one of my favorite ritual items: a Tibetan "Long Life Arrow." Representing the central channel and the Elements, the Long Life Arrow is a fine representation of the Paths of the Middle Pillar on the Tree of Life, showing the necessity of the moving of the psychic energies or winds (ruach/spiritus) for health and wellness.

I gave Darlene ground ginger and cardamom and told her to use it in equal portions if things ever got very bad during the next few days, but to not mix them together in advance. These will call in the "astral police," for lack of a better term, so I cautioned her against its indiscriminate use.

By 9:15 am I was ready to leave; Andrea had work obligations and I needed to go back to being a father. Darlene and Joe were both a bit teary-eyed and grateful. Lisiewski gave me a copy of Thorndike's *History of Magic and Experimental Science* and told me I could take anything I wanted. I said thank you and left only with what he personally gave me. I stopped at a Perkin's Pancake House near Bloomsburg on my way back and gave Paul Bowersox a call. On my way home I met with Andrea and the boys near Kingston. I was totally exhausted.

Joe called twice around dinner time and once after 11 pm. He relayed his gratitude, saying that he and Darlene slept all day, and told me that it was the best sleep they had ever had. They would start the Cyprian Novena the following Saturday, though not the upcoming Saturday (as I had instructed).

— Going Silent —
A few more of my notes from the period follow.
26 January 2016 (11:27 est)
I received the following email:
Dear Mark,

I am not in touch and will not be for some time. This is not a blow-off. I'm having some real non-cancer issues and don't even want to talk or have enough energy to write. Someday you'll get a surprise of a small call from an old buddy.

Again, thank you very much for the book Child of the Sun *and the oh-so-meaningful inscription you wrote inside.*
Sincerely [Darlene typing for Joe] in friendship and fraternity, Joe

10 March 2016

I received a call and voicemail from JL, stating that he wants to call me on Sunday at 9:00 pm. No mention regarding what about.

The call never came. This was the last time I heard from Lisiewski. Two weeks after his death on July 1, I received an email from Darlene stating that Joe had passed.

15 July 2016

Email received from Darlene regarding Joe:

Mark,

I am very sorry to inform you that Joseph passed away July 1. I gave him some morphine Rx and he went to sleep and never woke up. I am grateful for that, because he was in a lot of mental and physical pain, and at least at the end he was at peace. I am very sorry that I neglected to tell you until now, perhaps you already know. I informed many people and then got very tired and needed to take a rest because my own health isn't great right now.

Joe took to his bed entirely for the past couple of months, so I am grateful to you that he was able to spend his remaining time in relative peace because you had cleared the room for him. Thank you.

My best to you and yours,
Darlene

— Anticlimax —

It is difficult to know when Joe was telling the truth, exaggerating, or engaging in some form of "pious fiction"—that is, a kind of magical act wherein if the desired state is affirmed often enough, then it will be true. This is a model well known to those in the magical community, as well as within Psychosynthesis (Modeling Behavior) and Alcoholics Anonymous ("fake it 'til you make it").

I wanted to come to understand the contradictions between what Darlene had claimed regarding Lisiewski's academic credentials and his obituary. The following was sent to me from The Union Institute on September 13, 2016:

Hello, Mark, Dr. Joseph Charles Lisiewski matriculated on February 2, 1996 and graduated on October 31, 1998.

Here is the information I am able to provide according to federal regulations:

He earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree with a specialization in Chemical Physics from The Union Institute on October 31, 1998. His PDE (Dissertation) title: "Possible Electrodynamic Mechanisms Underlying the Origin of Living Systems."

Dr. Lisiewski's earned previous degrees were:
Master of Science with a major in Physics (1990) from Columbia Pacific University, San Rafael, CA.
Bachelor of Science with a major in Physics (1988) from Columbia Pacific University, San

Rafael, CA.

Dr. Fenner [Lisiewski's dissertation advisor] left the university some time ago and I do not have contact information for him. I did see that he shows up quite readily on a Google search.

I hope this helps.
Michael

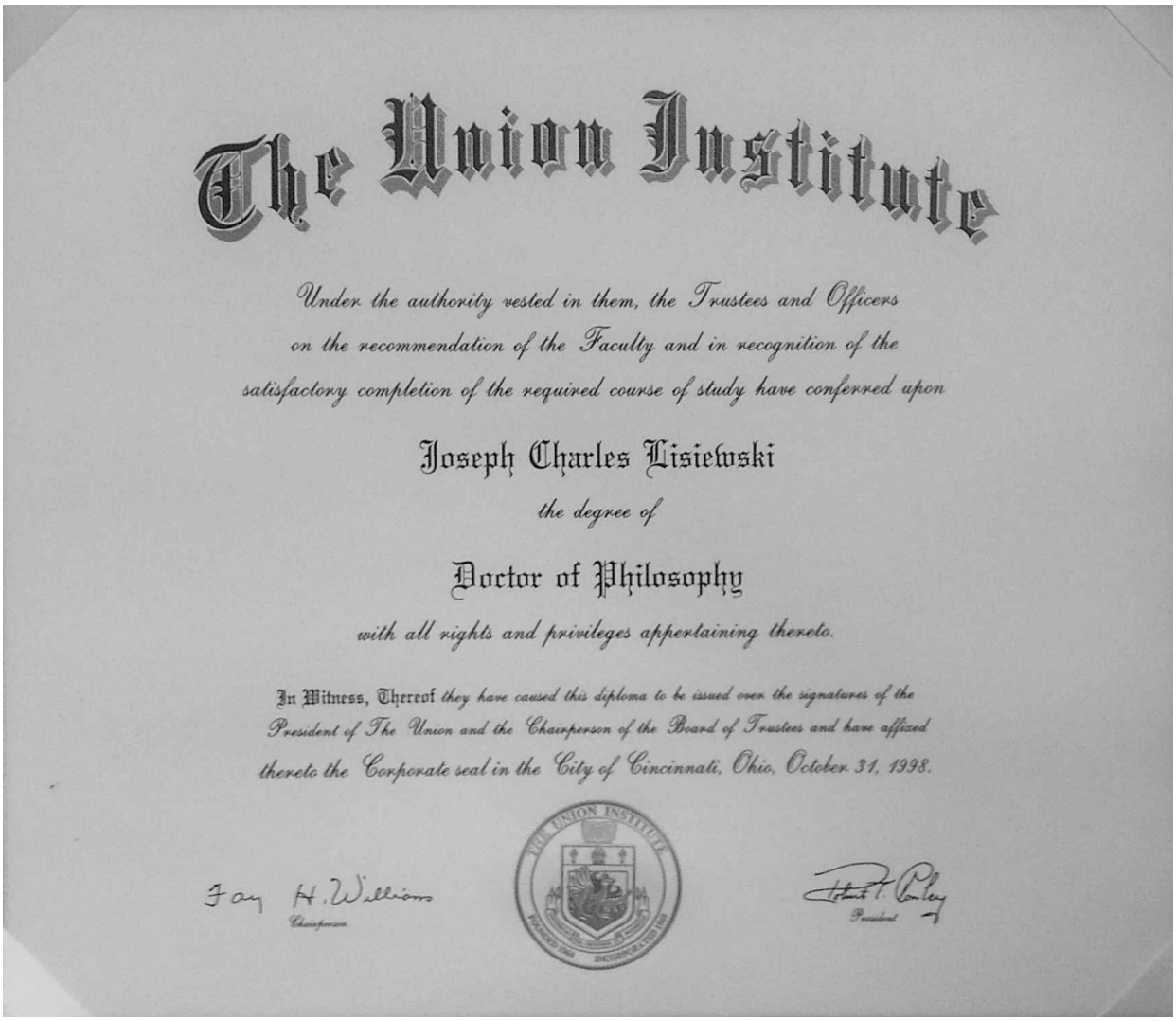
Dr. Michael A. Raffanti
Dean, Ph.D. Program in Interdisciplinary Studies Union Institute & University

Upon further research I discovered that Columbia Pacific University is a distance-learning institution that underwent extensive academic scrutiny in the 1990s, *after* Lisiewski's matriculation and receipt of degree. However, the problem arises of why he never publicly mentioned the source of his education, but instead went for higher-sounding programs which I have been unable to verify. This does not mean that he did not study or perform an internship at the University of Wales, or at CERN, only that without a clear academic trail, and essentially hiding the source of his academic credentials from sub-par institutions, such claims become suspicious as simple exaggerations. As he said to me once: "I never lied." But this does not mean that he did not stretch the truth when convenient.

After receiving Darlene's email about Lisiewski's death I called her to let her know that if she needed any help, she need only ask. She told me that she was not feeling well and could not talk long, but that "everything had been taken care of." This was the last time I had any contact with her. In late January 2017 I spoke with a former student of Lisiewski's who informed me that Darlene had sent his library—over two dozen boxes—to a student in the Southeast. Several weeks later I was contacted by the auctioneer of Joe and Darlene's estate. He told me that Darlene had moved to a nursing home in Maryland to be near her brother and his family. Problems with her mouth turned out to be cancer; she had only a short time left. It was said to me that she "looked forward to dying" and was "alert and in very good spirits." I was informed that Darlene died quietly in her sleep at 3:00 am on February 19, 2017.

A month later Lisiewski's diploma from The Union Institute arrived in my mailbox. Enclosed was a note:

Dear Mark, We had two very successful auctions. Enclosed is Dr. Joe's diploma. I can think of no one better to have it. Best wishes, Dean Cartwheel.



The Union Institute

Under the authority vested in them, the Trustees and Officers on the recommendation of the Faculty and in recognition of the satisfactory completion of the required course of study have conferred upon

Joseph Charles Lisiewski

the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

with all rights and privileges appertaining thereto.

In Witness, Thereof they have caused this diploma to be issued over the signatures of the President of The Union and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and have affixed thereto the Corporate seal in the City of Cincinnati, Ohio, October 31, 1998.

Fay H. Williams
Chairperson

Johnnetta B. Cole
President

Conclusion

I left out many details in writing this memoir of my experiences with Dr. Joseph Lisiewski, details that I am sure his detractors would love to hear for their "gossip value," but which would add no additional insight into his character, contributions, or failings. It is ironic that his public career as an occultist and author are better known and verifiable than his

"occulted" academic and professional claims. It would be too easy to dismiss Lisiewski as a fraud, con-man, or delusional. It would be equally simplistic to place him on a pedestal— something he eschewed—and thereby ignore his weaknesses. He often said: "In the end, all our teachers have feet of clay." For "those with eyes to see and ears to hear," Lisiewski's life is, as Dr. Joscelyn Godwin put it, "a cautionary tale," and typical of many who seek accomplishment through spiritual practices—no matter what those practices happen to be.

The nature of life is that nearly everything is a Faustian Deal, and occultism can be the most damning of them all, if only because it is too often taught as a system of experience independent of ethics, or as methods without morality. "The problem with the Golden Dawn," Patrick Zalewski once said

91 to me, "is that it has no common ethics. This makes for difficulty when people start throwing magic around." Or as William Butler Yeats put it (regarding the Golden Dawn): "I don't believe our Order was established to be a reform school." No it wasn't; it was a teaching school where it was generally believed that members had the basic "Sunday School" ethics of their cultural upbringing.

However, Lisiewski did not believe in ethics or morality as generally understood. He saw them as a covering for a host of human weaknesses. True as that may be, learning how to get along well with others while still being himself was something he wrestled with (as do many magicians of today). Eventually Lisiewski learned the lesson, but it may have been too late. As he would often say about New Thought: "It happened in and through me." Yes, everything in and through us, that is the nature of esoteric practices. Yet, we see him working on alchemy and magic in an almost mechanical fashion, not because those elements are not there, but because even *with* them, the energies of magic and alchemy always work *in and through us* first. This is what gave rise to his famous notion of the existence of the "subjective synthesis." Our subjective understanding of a ritual

and its constituent symbolic parts will be the filter through which the outcomes of the ritual (or any interior work) will be expressed.

From here, Lisiewski took the next logical step and decided to do away with symbolic representations and to use the mind directly—a sort of Raja Yoga. This was his jump into New Thought and "Higher Mysticism." Unfortunately, his approach more closely approximated the increasingly "nondual" philosophical approach, popular among those who feel themselves above all rules—only this was done without the prerequisite of moving through the stages preliminary to it. As a result, Lisiewski's failure was caused by one thing and one thing only: failure to know and truly love himself. You see, despite all of his accomplishments, real and imagined, he was like the rest of us: "human, all too human."

Within the context of occultism, however—particularly the brand which Lisiewski was a practitioner and advocate of—the ideal was to become "more than human," an end that almost encouraged reckless bravado at times (something we commonly see in modern spiritual circles). This is the style of "Old System Magic" that Lisiewski became one of the foremost advocates of and which brought him his public fame.

In the Adeptus Minor Initiation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, we read:

I further promise and swear that with the Divine permission I will, from this day forward, apply myself to the Great Work, which is, to purify and exalt my Spiritual Nature so that with the Divine Aid I may at length attain to be more than human, and thus gradually raise and unite myself to my higher and Divine Genius, and that in this event I will not abuse the great power entrusted to me... I furthermore solemnly pledge myself never...to debase my knowledge of Practical Magic to purposes of evil and self-seeking, and low material gain or pleasure, and if I do this, notwithstanding this my oath, I invoke the Avenging Angel HUA, that the evil and material may react on me.

Aspirations that are high and noble indeed, and from which if one slips and falls the consequences can be severe. Not so much because

of the punishing force of the Avenging Angel HUA, but more from one's own conscience if the aspirations were sincere to begin with. Even with sincerity, how is one to achieve such a lofty state without a knowledgeable and accomplished "friend and guide" to look to as an example?

"As above so below; as below, so above" is the most widely recognized Hermetic axiom. It appears that while Lisiewski focused on the "below" at the cost of better understanding the

"above," too many in occultism focus on the "above" and are unable to integrate it into daily living. This is an extremely common problem; it is one that can only be overcome, not avoided. Profound equilibrium must be expressed. At this point one is an authentic adept, or "more than human." At this moment, within the mind of the adept, the boundary between "spiritual" and "material" become permeable enough that the law of "cause and effect" (karma) is truly understood.

There is also something else that I have avoided stating until now, and I leave it to each reader to decide upon its truthfulness. If there is any truth to esoteric practices then the further we shift from the norm of daily life and along the path of self-awareness, the greater the pull there will be from the shadowy aspects of our psyche. These must be brought to light and integrated both in ourselves and in any group with which we are working. Here, the collective shadow can become a destructive force known as the *qlippoth*, or "shells." This opposition is a natural part of the path and one we must all overcome. It is also something that is magnified if the possible outcome of an individual or group's actions have the potential to be highly beneficial to human awakening.

This may be one of the reasons the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn failed to fulfill its self-appointed mission and imploded on itself, as well as why Lisiewski failed. Just as Lisiewski looked at the lives of many of his predecessors and noted that many died in poverty, obscurity, and sorrow, I have to look at the lives of Lisiewski and

those close to him and consider the same thing. S. Jason Black, the nefarious "demonologist supreme," died from addiction; Lisiewski battled his own addictions and died of cancer; Curt Coblarz-Schmidt had a difficult life cut short by addiction; Hyatt, a life cut short by cancer. There are others as well, and while each tried his best, the commonalities of ignoring their physical health as they entered into the domain of the mind play a large part in their early deaths. Combinations of obesity, smoking, anger, and addiction played a role in how they lived and died, and thereby how they applied the teachings of self-awareness to which they dedicated themselves.

Possibly a not-so-small part of this can be understood by what is found in the Temple Opening warning given in the rituals of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn:

Stoop not down into that darkly splendid world wherein continually lieth a faithless depth and Hades wrapped in gloom, delighting in unintelligible images, precipitous, winding; a black ever-rolling abyss, ever espousing a body unluminous, formless and void.

Or as Nietzsche, a favorite author of Lisiewski's, said in *Beyond Good and Evil* : "He who fights with monsters should be careful lest he thereby become a monster. And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee."[2]

The psychological implications are clear; for those of a more metaphysical orientation, remember that when you touch good or evil, it also touches you. Students of the mysteries are not to fear evil, but to learn to transform it, to use it, and to make something good of it. In many ways this is the work of evocation, of the *Goetia* and related works that Lisiewski and many others so loved. How well they have performed the process of transformation is a matter of opinion. What remains most important is how well *we* do it, each of us, and what lessons we can draw from their lives.

To my knowledge Lisiewski claimed no higher grade in the Golden Dawn than Adeptus Minor, so let us close with a final quote from that initiation to guide us all.

Despise not sadness, and hate not suffering, for they are the Initiators of the heart; and the black robe of mourning which thou wearest is at once the symbol of sorrow and of strength. Boast not thyself above thy brother if he hath fallen, for how knowest thou that thou couldst have withstood the same temptation? Slander not, and revile not. If thou canst not praise, do not condemn. When thou seest another in trouble and humiliation, even though he be thy enemy, remember the time of

[2]Chapter IV, Section 146; translation by Thomas Common.

thine own humiliation when thou didst kneel before the door of the Tomb, clothed in the Robe of Mourning, with the Chain of Affliction about thy neck, and thy hands bound behind thy back, and rejoice not at his fall. And in thine intercourse with the members of our Order, let thy hand given unto another be a sincere and genuine pledge of fraternity. Respect his or her secrets and feelings as thou wouldst respect thine own. Bear with one another and forgive one another, even as the Master hath said.

Good luck Joe, wherever—or "whenever"—you are.

A

APPENDIX: The Real Death of Dr. Lisiewski

Like so many who had gone before him—his teacher and friend Israel Regardie included—Lisiewski found that magic often takes far in excess of what it gives in return. For him, that was a lifetime and more. The question many of you have at this moment is: does it have to be that way? Does magic always have to be loss and suffering?

The answer is a difficult one, and in fact is answerable only on an individual basis.
As related in the introduction to this book, the post-World War Two coal regions of Eastern and Central Pennsylvania in the 1950s and 1960s are where Lisiewski was born and grew to manhood. It was—for those with some money, smarts, and talent—a place that could be either a pleasantly quiet middle-class life or a place to escape from for broader horizons beyond the Blue Mountains. However, without brains, talent, or money, it could just as easily be a prison for the mind and soul, where each day was the same as the last until you died.
Lisiewski had no money, but he had brains, talent, and ambition, and with it sought his way out. Magic would be the tool that would catapult him to greater opportunity and a success that demonstrated to those he left behind

97 his greatness—his natural superiority. Lisiewski was fond of stating that when he was still a child the school counselor told his parents that he was of marginal intelligence and would "make a good plumber's assistant if he worked hard." To rise above such low expectations and achieve a graduate degree in Chemical Engineering, later furthering his work with a doctoral program in physics, was Lisiewski's great achievement in many ways—but it was not enough. The rage he had over his early upbringing was clearly expressed in

his novel *The Altar Path*, wherein the town of Defiance, Pennsylvania, is wiped from the map by an act of black magic— in many ways making Lisiewski's story a cross between that of the Tibetan Milarepa and Faust.

Accepting people and things "as they are" is not something Lisiewski was able to do, even when that acceptance was to be applied to himself. Of course the desire for change is what propelled him to some significant degree of academic and occult achievement—otherwise you would not be reading this book. However, this desire for achievement, accomplishment, and success—all important goals—were tainted by *anger*. This anger infected everything he did and poisoned not only his personal and professional relationships, but also himself. You see, what really killed Joseph Lisiewski was not cancer from a lifetime of smoking nor damage to his liver from a period of alcoholism, but *anger*, a rage so palpable that in the end it exhausted him and left him with only the contents of his own mind.

Now before anyone rushes to judgment or claps their hands in glee, take a warning from Lisiewski's life and accomplishments (which were many). In the end he died in pain, both physical and mental—a pain that might have been foreshadowed in his (nearly unreadable) novel *Geometries of the Mind*, a tale of descent into madness, in which the back jacket copy reads: "[Lisiewski] takes the reader on a terrifying journey into the depths of one man's mind who dared to play God." In his Water Work and experimentation with the Homunculus, this is not far from the truth.

It would be nice to point to Lisiewski and say he was the exception: misunderstood genius, occultist who was "human, all too human." But in the end, he is too often the norm. Looking at his peers and many in the occult circles he ran with during the 1960s through 1980s—even into the 1990s— we see too many common denominators, particularly among a small group who were associated with the Golden Dawn, the O.T.O., A ∴ A ∴, and associated streams of eclectic magic often focusing on demonic evocation. Despite their

intellectual brilliance and flare for language (particularly sarcasm), far too many of them smoked, drank, were obese, ate poorly, and died of cancer or accidental overdose, financially broke and leaving their families with little or nothing other than bills to pay. All of this happened a decade or more short of the expected lifespan of the average American male. Thus, if you want to be miserable, broke, and dead by sixty or sixty-five years of age, follow their real-life examples, not just their published ones.

Anger is destructive to the mind, brain, and body. Nothing can be built on it that will last. While Lisiewski managed to have the achievement of experiencing Knowledge and Conversation with his Holy Guardian Angel, he could not achieve his True Will, because his will was divided by anger. To achieve his True Will, he needed to reconcile what modern magicians call the Pillars of Mercy and Severity, particularly of Geburah and Chesed. This can only be done with great personal courage and strength. More importantly, it requires love. Love is essential for bridging this illusory divide. Like nearly every one of his peers, and many now in the occult community —particularly its most vocal leaders—Lisiewski chained himself to the Pillar of Severity. We see the same in those of lesser caliber, with their incessant bickering, namecalling, and nit-picking at ritual minutiæ. Ultimately we see the results of this in their failed relationships, be those professional, personal, or with fellow lodge members.

The Path of the Tower is the lesser reflection of the Path of Strength that Lisiewski sought to cross but failed. It is critical for our health and well being that we learn to have meaningful relationships of a social, professional, and personal nature. To achieve this goal, the powers of Netzach need to be integrated into our lives. For too many people, failure to achieve a genuinely loving relationship with others is masked in isolation, the false Path of the Hermit, rather than in its actual reconciliation. In some ways this is still preferable to the nearly constant arguing, bickering, and moralizing (of all sorts) that contaminate modern magical movements. Sarcasm—the verbal

weapon of choice among the brilliant but emotionally immature—is veiled anger, no matter how funny it may appear at the moment. It is a way of slapping someone when the speaker has neither the ability nor the courage to do so physically in person. Sarcasm *increases* problems in life—it cannot solve them; it is intellectual pride. This is important: verbal sparring and even combat are vices of Hod, of Mercury, of the Mind, that must be overcome if lasting awareness of other areas symbolized by the "Middle Triad" of Spheres on the Tree of Life are to be successfully integrated, and not act as the forces that explode our lives or end up cutting them short.

Yet, the *Splendor Solis* (a book of alchemy often compared to the tarot because of its twenty-two plates) finishes with a blessing: that the alchemist should come to a "good end." That is: our lives are to be happy, healthy, prosperous, long, and a blessing to ourselves and others. This blessing is, in simple terms, helping ourselves and those we encounter to actualize their potential, their fullness of Being. While anger can point to things that need to be cleared for that to happen, in itself it is not the tool that makes it happen. It is the sword that cuts the undergrowth; it is not the spade that digs the earth nor the plough that makes for planting the seeds. Anger, selfrighteousness, and pride are a powerfully destructive trinity that must be transformed before they destroy us—and destroy us they will if we do not bring the Three Daughters of Sophia (Faith, Hope, and Charity/Love) into our lives.

This moral principle is even more important today, as we see the notion of magical curses and hexing taking center stage in certain circles—the idea being that it is not for personal gain or revenge, but for "justice." Several forums have been held wherein the discussion centered on the question of whether hexing is "appropriate" or not. For an adept of any worth this is a simple question with a simple answer: *if you have to ask, then it is beyond you*. By this we mean that for every action there is a reaction, a result (karma if you will), and if you do not understand the effects of your actions then they are beyond your capacity to perform without great risk of injury and

harm to yourself and others. Everything we invoke or evoke must first work in and through us. We cannot escape the fruits of our actions. If you seek to invoke Justice, then be prepared for Justice to act in, on, and through you as well.

This leads us to the discussion of Pride, the worst of sins, as it is the hardest to overcome. Pride is considered "Luciferian" or "Satanic" because it is not the Divine Pride of the Vajray¯ana practitioner who seeks to express his or her fullest potential, nor pride in a job well done, as we teach our children to indulge. Instead, the Vice of Pride separates us from our fellow beings—not just humans, but all classes of beings—and in our mind and action places them in a defined position of servitude in relation to us, regardless of their actual hierarchical rank.

When we separate occult practices too distantly from basic moral and ethical principles, we lose sight of the interconnectedness of all the cosmos. It is this cosmos wherein our magic takes place. Contemporary magicians, regardless of what system they are practicing, must pay heed to these words if they wish to accomplish their goals through metaphysical means.

In closing, perhaps it is best to remind ourselves of 1 Corinthians, 1-13:

If I shall speak with every human and angelic language and have no love in me, I shall be clanging brass or a noise-making cymbal. And if I have prophecy, and I know all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so that I may remove mountains, and I have no love in me, I would be nothing. And if I should feed everything that I have to the poor, and if I hand over my body to be burned up and I have no love in me, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and sweet; love does not envy; love is not upset neither puffed up. Love does not commit what is shameful, neither does it seek its own; it is not provoked, neither does it entertain evil thoughts, rejoices not in evil, but rejoices in the truth, endures all things, believes all things, hopes all, bears all.

Love never fails; for prophecies shall cease, tongues shall be silenced and knowledge will be nothing; for we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when perfection shall come, then that which is partial shall be nothing. When I was a child, I was speaking as a child, I was led as a child, I was thinking as a child, but when I became a man, I ceased these childish things. Now we see as in a mirror, in an allegory, but then face-to-face. Now I know

partially, but then I shall know as I am known. For there are these three things that endure: Faith, Hope, and Love, but the greatest of these is Love.

You cannot touch evil and get away unscathed—but it can be purified.
Remember always that Love—be it Eros, Philo, or Agap´e— is the key to magical realization; by doing so, may each and every one of you come to a "Good End."

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B

APPENDIX: Hans Nintzel

Hans Nintzel was born in Brooklyn, New York, on April 1, 1932. A profound student of occultism, he was deeply influenced by the writings of Dion Fortune. As a professional and family man in his forties, Hans would hear the clarion call of alchemy and study with Frater Albertus from the 1970s until Albertus's death. A close associate of Israel Regardie, Hans stated: "Regardie told me I was the only person he had met that did not need psychotherapy before practicing magic." Well known throughout the magical and alchemical communities, Hans's legacy would come in the forms of both teaching and publishing.

In 1977 Hans and his wife Jody purchased a home at 733 Melrose Drive in Richardson, Texas. It was here they would raise their family, organize and publish alchemical manuscripts under the auspices of the Restoration of Alchemical Manuscripts Society (RAMS), and, two or three times a year, instruct students in the mysteries of magic and alchemy. Hans was influential behind the scenes as well, assisting in the translation and publication of *The Practical Handbook of Plant Alchemy* by Manfred Junius,[1] as well as introducing

[1]Manfred Junius, *The Practical Handbook of Plant Alchemy: An Herbalist's Guide to Preparing Medicinal Essences, Tinctures, and*

 Jean Dubuis's The Philosophers of Nature to the United States and bringing Adam McLean's *The Hermetic Journal* to a wider audience.

Hans organized numerous events, including Junius's first American alchemical class in 1990. He was also an active member and co-founder of the Celtic Christian Church. Along with Carr Collins, Jr., they arranged for the Church to have a direct connection to Dion Fortune's Society of the Inner Light, through the lineage of Alan Adams (a.k.a. Charles Fielding).

At his memorial service, it was said that under Frater Albertus's direction Hans had "discovered the Mercury of the Philosophers, the true key of the Hermetic sanctuary, which certifies him as an adept of the alchemical science."

Professionally, Hans was a civil engineer with a Master's in Business Administration, employed in information systems management, and Jody was a counselor for troubled youth. They were survived by their three sons: Peter, Jeff, and Doug.

Hans died on December 3, 2000. The following is the text of an advertisement I wrote in 1995 for Hans's services and provides a good general idea of what it was like to study with him.

Elixirs (Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1993). Originally published in Italian under the title *Alchimia verde: Spagyrica vegetale* (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1979).

Hans Nintzel

a weekend with hans

alchemy the old-fashioned way

Are you looking to learn ceremonial magick, Kabbalah, or practical plant and mineral alchemy the old-fashioned way—from someone who knows it? If so, consider giving Hans a call.

Hans Nintzel of Richardson, Texas, the self-described "Boy Alchemist," is a treat to work with. Just ask any of the eighteen or so people who sat in his living room for a weekend last January to hear him talk, lecture, pontificate, and joke (lots of jokes!) about his experiences and insights into the world of magick and alchemy. In this cozy, informal and—oh, yes—highly affordable atmosphere (less than half of the going rate for similar-length seminars), students did the introductory work of Kabbalah, magick, and alchemy...topics in which Hans is no dilettante.

Hans has been studying alchemy for a long time, over twenty years, and across those two-plus decades has known some of the best teachers there are. He studied for seven years with the renowned Frater Albertus (Albert Riedel), author of *The Alchemist's Handbook* (Weiser Publications), and knew Albertus until his death in the mid-'80s. For several years, Albertus's Paracelsus Research Society was the only place in the United States to study practical plant and mineral alchemy, aimed at the creation of what all alchemists dream—the Philosopher's Stone.

The story doesn't end there.
Students of alchemy should pay close attention to the preface of Manfred M. Junius's

Practical Handbook of Plant Alchemy (Inner Traditions). Hans was instrumental in the publication of its English translation, and continues a working relationship with the famous German expatriate "spagyrist" living down under in Australia. Hans has also made his mark on another organization now teaching practical Hermeticism, the American branch of the French alchemical organization known as The Philosophers of Nature.

And that is just the short history of his credentials in laboratory alchemy.

Magick, another specialty of Nintzel's, is related to his study and teaching of the alchemical Path. For over twenty years he was a student, friend, and traveling companion of Dr. Francis Israel Regardie. Author of many books on psychology and magick, Regardie is most famous for his editing and subsequent publishing of the rituals and teachings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and for having been for several years the personal secretary of Aleister Crowley. Hans wrote an article on alchemy for the largest and newest version of the Golden Dawn ritual publications, *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magick* (Falcon Press), when Regardie and others were updating the earlier work.

Parts of Hans and his wife Jody's home look more like shrines to Regardie than living quarters. Frescoes of Egyptian gods decorate the walls of one room along with a table done in the style of the Hermetic Rosy Cross—all made by Regardie himself.

But all this experience with some of the "greats," as Hans calls them, hasn't gone completely to his head. When one of his long-time students jokingly referred to him as "the Master," Nintzel quickly took advantage of the opportunity to point out to the class that he "considers [himself] no master. I have something to share with you. I am farther on the Path than most of you here, that is why you are here. If you are more advanced than me, then please feel free to share, but I am no master, only a student with a little more experience."

For their money and time, students who attend his workshops get a massive amount of handouts, over 150 pages' worth, taken from Hans's personal notebooks and research. Study guides, correspondences, directions on the preparation of plant tinctures (for this course), ritual materials, as well as what to do and what you need to know if you want to attend parts two and three of his weekend seminar series. Money isn't enough—you have to show that you've done the inner work necessary for more instruction: "When you come for Part Two, I'll give you a test to see if you can identify the Hebrew alphabet, and the names of the spheres on the Tree of Life. If you can't, then you'll have to leave until you can."

Also, if money is a problem, talk to Hans and work something out—dedicated students of the Art are what he is after, not just names on a mailing list. Something to remember: seating is scarce, Hans only does two to three workshops a year on an as-needed basis. That means several months' worth of homework is given between each session.

So, if you want to learn magick, alchemy, and Kabbalah the old-fashioned way—from someone who *knows* as well as *teaches*—give Hans a call. It will be worth it.

Hans W. Nintzel can be reached at 733 Melrose Dr., Richardson TX 75080, and he does travel.

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www.hermeticinstitute.org info@hermeticinstitute.org **Mark Stavish** (Pennsylvania) is a respected authority in the study and practice of Western spiritual traditions. He is the author of *The Path of Alchemy*, *Kabbalah for Health & Wel lness*, and *Between the Gates: Lucid Dreaming, Astral Projection, and the Body of Light in Western Esotericism*; both volumes of the IHS Ritual Series, *The Liturgy of Hermes* and *Meditations & Rituals*; as well as the IHS Monograph Series and the IHS Study Guides, *Light on the Path*, *The Inner Way*, *Child of the Sun*, *Words of My Teachers*, and *Unfolding the Rose*. His works have been translated into nine languages worldwide. He is founder of both the non-profit Institute for Hermetic Studies (Wyoming, Pennsylvania), where he is Director of Studies, and the Louis Claude de St.-Martin Fund, a non-profit fund dedicated to the study and practice of esotericism.

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